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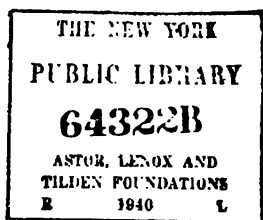
EDITOR OF THE KNICKERBOCKER.

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1845.

K. B. N.



Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1845,
BY LEWIS GAYLORD CLARK,
In the Clerk's office of the District Court of the Southern District of New-York.

P R E F A C E .

READER, you will like this volume. There are several reasons *why* you will like it—why it cannot *but* be to you a pleasant companion. In the first place, it has abundant *variety* ; and in the next place, the matters that form that variety are the very best of their kind, and from several of the most popular writers known in the United States. Let us glance a moment at the contents of the book.

✓ If 'THE FIRST LOCOMOTIVE' had not possessed a rare order of merit, Mr. WASHINGTON IRVING would never have written the admirable continuation of it, which follows it in the present volume.

✓ The 'BLANK BOOK OF A COUNTRY SCHOOLMASTER,' by HENRY W. LONGFELLOW, has never been included in any of his published volumes. It will commend *itself* to every reader, and needs no comment from the Editor.

The story of 'RALPH RINGWOOD,' by WASHINGTON IRVING, is what it purports to be, an authentic narrative. RALPH RINGWOOD, though a fictitious name, is a real personage. It can do no harm to mention now, since the fact has transpired in some of the public journals, that Governor DUVAL of Florida sat for the faithful picture. Mr. IRVING informed the Editor, that meeting the narrator at the house of a mutual friend in New-York, he became so interested in his personal adventures, related in a style peculiarly his own, that he could not resist the inclination to accompany him to a Southern city, on his journey home, and every day after dinner record portions of his narrative, while yet fresh from his lips. 'I have given some anecdotes of his early and eccentric career,' says Mr. IRVING, in a note to the Editor, 'in as nearly as I can recollect the very words in which he related them. They certainly afforded strong temptations to the embellishments of fiction; but I thought them so strikingly characteristic of the individual, and of the scenes and society into which his peculiar humors carried him, that I preferred giving them in their original simplicity.' The reader will admit that nothing could be more attractive than the plain and truthful style of the narrative.

The 'STORY OF THE SKELETON IN ARMOR,' by LONGFELLOW, is one of the most powerful and spirited performances of that popular writer's pen. It

forms a succession of pictures, which are so vividly presented to the mind, that 'it requires but a little stretch of the imagination to transfer them, in fancy, to actual canvass.'

'PETER CRAM AT TENNECUM' is from the pen of Mr. FREDERICK W. SHELTON, of Long-Island, a most humorous and felicitous writer, of whom it has been well said, that 'no daguerreotype could more accurately and vividly present *nature*, animate and inanimate, human and animal, than he.' The reader will have an opportunity to test the justice of this praise.

GEOFFREY CRAYON'S Communipaw Legend, the 'GUESTS FROM GIBBET-ISLAND,' is as wild and 'thrilling' (to adopt a hackneyed word) as any kindred effort of that eminent writer's pen. The story will compare favorably with any one of a similar character in any of Mr. IRVING'S published works.

The name of the author of 'CHILDHOOD' is unknown to the Editor. The Essay was sent to him anonymously; but he would be doing injustice to the writer, not to declare it as his belief, that no other portion of the contents of the present volume better deserves, or is more likely to secure, the favorable regard of the reader.

'THE IRON FOOT-STEP' was committed to paper by its author, at the suggestion of GEOFFREY CRAYON, who had heard it with admiration from the writer's lips. It is a strange and mysterious narrative,

and yet is in all its particulars strictly true. Its manner could not be improved.

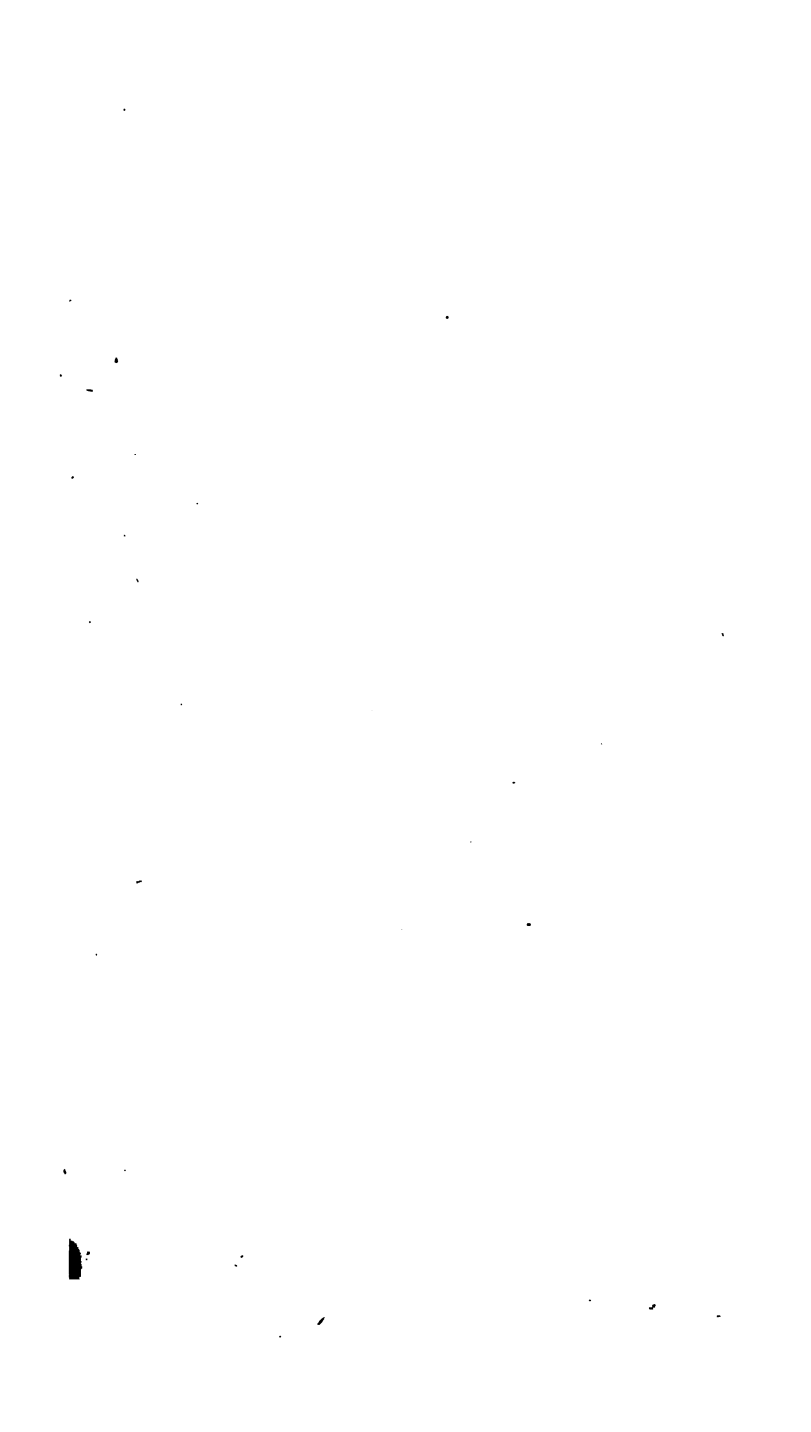
The next is the narrative of 'MOUNTJOY, OR SOME PASSAGES OUT OF THE LIFE OF A CASTLE-BUILDER.' It is sufficient to say of this faultless performance, that it is by the author of the 'SKETCH-BOOK,' and was written and prepared for publication in that work; but owing to circumstances, operative at the time, it was laid aside, and never opened to the light of day until more than twenty-years afterward. It is therefore a truthful record of young, untutored, un-hackneyed fancies, feelings and affections.

'THE MARRIED MAN'S EYE' will arrest and sustain the attention of nine *Wives* in every ten, who have been subjected—and what wife has not?—to the silent but potent influence, so well described by the author; herself a wife, who depicts, we doubt not, 'what she has *seen*, and part of which she *was*.'

For the plan of the series, of which the present volume is the first, the reader is referred to the second and fourth pages of the cover of the present volume.

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THE FIRST LOCOMOTIVE.



THE FIRST LOCOMOTIVE.

'If I stand here, I saw it!' SHAKESPEARE.

It is now very generally conceded, that of all the inventions of man, none holds any comparison with the steam-boat. The mind can scarcely combine a calculation which may measure its importance. Some vague estimate may indeed be formed of it, by imagining what would be the state and condition of the world, at the present day, were there *no* steam-boats ; were we still to find ourselves on board sloops, making an average passage of a week to Albany, exposed to all the disasters of flaws from the 'down-comer,' and discomfiture of close cabins ; or ascending the Mississippi in a keel-boat, pushed every inch of the way against its mighty current, by long poles, at the rate of 'fourteen miles in sixteen hours.'

It is now just thirty years, since the first steam-boat ascended the Hudson, being the first practical application of a steam-engine to, water-conveyance. *Then*, no other river had ever seen a steam-boat ; and *now*, what river, capable of any kind

of navigation, has not been bepaddled with them? It is not my purpose to enter the list of disputants, lately sprung up, striving to prove that the immortal FULTON was *not* the first successful projector of a steam-boat. In common with the world, I can but mourn over the poverty of history, that tells not of any *previous* successful effort of the kind. Steam, no doubt, was known before. The first tea-kettle that was hung over a fire, furnished a clear development of that important agent. But all I can say now, is, that I never heard of a steam-boat, before the 'North River' moved her paddles on the Hudson; and very soon after that period, when it was contemplated to send a steam-boat to Southern Russia, a distinguished orator of that day, in an address before the New-York Historical Society, eloquently said, in direct allusion to the steam-boat: 'The hoary genius of Asia, high throned on the peaks of Caucasus, his moist eye glistening as he glances over the destruction of Palmyra and Persepolis, of Jerusalem and of Babylon, will bend with respectful deference to the inventive spirit of this western world; thus proving conclusively, that the invention was not only of this country, but that no other country yet knew of it. In fact the invention had not yet even reached the Mississippi; for it was not until a year after, that a long-armed, high-shouldered keel-boatman, who had just succeeded in doubling a bend in the river, by dint of hard pushing, and run his boat in a quiet eddy, for a resting spell, saw a steam-boat gallantly paddling up against the centre current of that 'Father of Rivers,' and gazing at the scene with mingled *surprise and triumph*, he threw down his pole, and,

slapping his hands together in extacy, exclaimed :
' Well done, old Massassippi ! May I be eternally
smashed, if you ha' n't got your match at last !'

But as before hinted, it is not my design to furnish
a conclusive history of the origin of steam-boats.
My text stands at the head of this article ; and I pur-
pose here to record, for the information of all future
time, a faithful history of 'THE FIRST LOCOMOTIVE.'
I am determined, at least that *that* branch of the great
steam family shall know its true origin.

In the year 1808, I enjoyed the never-to-be-forgotten
gratification of a *paddle* up the Hudson, on board
the aforesaid first steam-boat that ever moved on the
waters of any river, with passengers. Among the
voyagers, was a man I had known for some years
previous, by the name of Jabez Doolittle. He was
an industrious and ingenious worker in sheet-iron,
tin, and wire ; but his greatest success lay in wire-
work, especially in making 'rat-traps ;' and for his
last and best invention in that line, he had just
secured a patent : and with a specimen of his work,
he was then on a journey through the state of New-
York, for the purpose of disposing of what he called
'county rights ;' or, in other words, to sell the privi-
lege of catching rats, according to his patent trap.
It was a very curious trap, as simple as it was in-
genious ; as most ingenious things are, *after* they
are invented. It was an oblong wire-box, divided
into two compartments ; a rat entered one, where the
bait was hung, which he no sooner touched, than the
door at which he entered, fell. His only apparent
escape was by a funnel-shaped hole into the other
apartment, in passing which he moved another wire

which instantly *re-set* the trap; and thus rat after rat was furnished the means of 'following in the foot-steps of his illustrious predecessor,' until the trap was full. Thus it was not simply a trap to catch a rat, but a trap by which rats trapped rats, *ad infinitum*. And now that the recollection of that wonderful trap is recalled to my memory, I would respectfully recommend it to the attention of the treasury department, as an appendage to the sub-treasury system. The 'specification' may be found on file in the patent office, number eleven thousand seven hundred and forty-six.

This trap, at the time to which I allude, absolutely divided the attention of the passengers; and for my part, it interested me quite as much as did the steam-engine; because, perhaps, I could more easily comprehend its mystery. To me the steam-engine was Greek; the trap was plain English. Not so, however, to Jabez Doolittle. I found him studying the engine with great avidity and perseverance, insomuch that the engineer evidently became alarmed, and declined answering any more questions.

'Why, you need n't snap off so tarnal short,' said Jabez; 'a body would think you had n't got a patent for your machine. If I can't meddle with you on the water, as nigh as I can calculate, I'll be up to you on land, one of these days.'

These ominous words fell on my ear, as I saw Jabez issue from the engine-room, followed by the engineer, who seemed evidently to have got his steam up.

'Well,' said I, 'Jabez, what do you think of this *mighty machine*?' 'Why,' he replied, 'if that crit-

ter had n't got riled up so soon, a body could tell more about it; but I reckon I've got a leetle notion on't;' and then taking me aside, and looking carefully around, lest some one should overhear him, he 'then and there' assured me in confidence, in profound secresy, that if he did n't make *a wagon* go by steam, before he was two years older, then he'd give up invention. I at first ridiculed the idea; but when I thought of that rat-trap, and saw before me a man with sharp twinkling gray eyes, a pointed nose, and every line of his visage a channel of investigation and invention, I could not resist the conclusion, that if he really ever did attempt to meddle with hot water, we should hear more of it.

Time went on. Steam-boats multiplied; but none dreamed, or if they did, they never told their dreams, of a steam-wagon; for even the name of 'locomotive' was then as unknown as 'loco-foco.' When, about a year after the declaration of the last war with England, (*and may it be the last !*) I got a letter from Jabez, marked 'private,' telling me that he wanted to see me 'most desperately,' and that I must make him a visit at his place 'nigh Wallingford.' The din of arms, and the destruction of insurance companies, the smashing of banks, and suspension of specie payments, and various other inseparable attendants on the show and 'pomp and circumstance of glorious war,' had in the mean time entirely wiped from memory my friend Jabez, and his wonderful rat-trap. But I obeyed his summons, not knowing but that something of importance to the army or navy might come of it. On reaching his residence, imagine my

surprise, when he told me, he believed he 'had got the notion.'

'Notion?—what notion?' I inquired.

'Why,' says he, 'that *steam-wagon* I tell'd you about, a spell ago;' 'but,' added he, 'it has pretty nigh starved me out;' and sure enough, he did look as if he had been on 'the anxious-seat,' as he used to say, when things puzzled him.

'I have used up,' said he, 'plaguey nigh all the sheet-iron, and old stove-pipes, and mill-wheels, and trunnel-heads, in these parts; but I've succeeded; and for fear that some of these 'cute folks about here may have got a peep through the key-hole, and will trouble me when I come to get a patent, I've sent for you to be a witness; for you was the first and only man I ever hinted the notion to; in fact,' continued he, 'I think the most curious part of this invention is, that as yet I don't know any one about here who has been able to guess what I'm about. They all know it is an invention, of some kind, for that's my business, you know; but some say it is a thrashing-machine, some a distillery; and of late, they begin to think it's a shingle-splitter; but they'll sing another tune, when they see it spinning along past the stage-coaches,' added he, with a knowing chuckle, 'won't they?'

This brought us to the door of an old clap-boarded, dingy, long, one-story building, with a window or two in the roof, the knot-holes and cracks all carefully stuffed with old rags, and over the door he was unlocking, was written, in bold letters, 'NO ADMITTANCE.' This was his 'sanctum sanctorum.' I *could occupy pages* in description of it, for every part

exhibited evidences of its uses. The patent-office at Washington, like your Magazine, Mr. Editor, may exhibit 'finished productions,' of 'inventive genius;' but if you could look into the port-folios of your contributors, in every quarter of the Union, and see there the sketches of half-finished essays, still-born poems, links and fragments of ideas and conceptions, which 'but breathed and died,' you might form some 'notion' of the accumulation of 'notions' that were presented to me, on entering the work-shop of Jabez Doolittle. But to my text again, 'The First Locomotive.' There it stood, occupying the centre of all previous conceptions, rat-traps, churns, apple-parers, pill-rollers, cooking-stoves, and shingle-splitters, which hung or stood around it; or as my Lord Byron says, with reference to a more ancient but not more important invention :

'Where each conception was a heavenly guest,
A ray of immortality, and stood
Star-like around, until they gathered to a God.'

And there it stood, 'the concentrated focus' of all previous rays of inventive genius, 'THE FIRST LOCOMOTIVE.'

An unpainted, unpolished, unadorned oven-shaped mass, of double-riveted sheet-iron, with cranks, and pipes, and trunnell-heads, and screws, and valves, all firmly braced on four strongly-made travelling wheels.

'It's a curious crittur to look at,' says Jabez, 'but you'll like it better, when you see it in motion.'

He was by this time igniting a quantity of charcoal, which he had stuffed under the boiler. 'I filled the b'iler,' says he, 'arter I stopped working her yes-

terday, and it ha' n't leaked a drop since. It will soon bile up; the coal is first rate.'

Sure enough, the boiler soon gave evidence of 'troubled waters,' when, by pushing one slide, and pulling another, the whole machine, cranks and piston, was in motion.

'It works slick, do n't it?' said Jabez.

'But,' I replied, 'it do n't move.'

'You mean,' said he, 'the travelling wheels do n't move; well, I do n't mean they shall, till I get my patent. You see,' he added, crouching down, 'that trunnel-head, there—that small cog-wheel? Well, that's out of gear just yet; when I turn *that* into gear, by this crank, it fits, you see, on the main travelling wheel, and then the hull scrape will move, as nigh as I can calculate, a leetle slower than chain lightnin', and a darn'd leetle too! But it wont do to give it a try, afore I get the patent. There is only one thing yet,' he continued, 'that I ha' n't contrived—but that is a simple matter—and that is, the shortest mode of stoppin' on her. My first notion is, to see how fast I can make her work, without smashing all to bits, and that's done by screwing down this upper valve; and I'll show you ——'

And with that, he clambered up on the top, with a turning screw in one hand, and a horn of soap-fat in the other, and commenced screwing down the valves, and oiling the piston-rod and crank-joints; and the motion of the mysterious mass increased, until all seemed A BUZ.

'It is nigh about perfection, aint it?' says he.

I stood amazed in contemplating the object before me, *which I confess I could not fully understand;*

and hence, with the greater readiness, permitted my mind to bear off to other matters more comprehensible; to the future, which is always more clear than the present, under similar circumstances. I heeded not, for the very best reason in the world, because I understood not, the complicated description that Jabez was giving of his still more complicated invention. All I knew was, that here was a machine on four good sturdy well-braced wheels, and it only required a recorded patent, to authorize that small connecting cog-wheel or trunnel-head to be thrown 'into gear,' when it would move off, without oats, hay, or horse-shoes, and distance the mail-coaches. As I was surrounded with notions, it was not extraordinary that *one* should take full possession of me. It dawned upon me, when I saw the machine first put into motion, and was now full orb'd above the horizon of my desire; it was to see the first locomotive move off. The temptation was irresistible. 'And who knows,' thought I, 'but some prying scamp may have been 'peeping through the key-hole,' while Jabez was at work, and, catching the idea, may be now at work at some clumsy imitation? — and if he does not succeed in turning the first trick, may at least divide the honors with my friend?'

'Jabez,' said I, elevating my voice above the buzzing noise of the machine, 'there is only one thing wanting.'

'What is that?' says he, eagerly.

'Immortality,' said I; 'and you shall have it, patent or no patent!' And with that, I pulled the crank that twisted the connecting trunnel-head into the travelling wheels, and in an instant away went

the machine, with Jabez on top of it, with the whiz and rapidity of a flushed partridge. The side of the old building presented the resistance of wet paper. One crash, and the 'first locomotive' was ushered into this breathing world. I hurried to the opening, and had just time to clamber to the top of a fence, to catch the last glimpse of my fast-departing friend. True to his purpose, I saw him alternately screwing down the valves, and oiling the piston-rod and crank-joints; evidently determined that, although he had started off a little unexpectedly, he would redeem the pledge he had given, which was, that when it *did* go, it 'would go a leetle slower than a streak of chain lightnin', and a darn'd leetle too !

'Like a cloud in the dim distance fleeting,
Like an arrow,' he flew away !

But a moment, and he was *here* ; in a moment he was *there* ; and now *where* is he ?—or rather, where is he not ? But that, for the present, is 'neither here nor there.'

The vile Moslem ridiculed the belief, so religiously cherished by the Christian Don, that in all the bloody conflicts that laid the crescent low in the dust, Saint Iago, on a white horse, led on to battle, and secured triumph to the cross ; but as this has now become matter of history, confirmed by the fact that on numerous occasions this identical 'warrior saint' was distinctly seen 'pounding the Moors,' successfully and simultaneously, in battle scenes remote from each other, thus proving his identity by saintly ubiquity ; so may we safely indulge the belief, that the spirit, if *not* the actual body and bones, of Jabez Doolittle *stands perched on every locomotive that may now be*

seen, in every direction, threading its way at the rate of thirty miles an hour, to the total annihilation of space and time. The incredulous, like the Moors of old, may indulge their unbelief; but for myself, I never see a locomotive in full action, that I do not also see Jabez there, directing its course, as plainly as I see the immortal CLINTON in every canal-boat, or the equally immortal FULTON in every steam-boat.

Unfortunately, however, these, like Jabez Doolittle, started in their career of glory without a patent; trusting too far to an ungrateful world; and now the descendants of either may (if they pay their passage,) indulge the luxury that the 'inventive spirit' of their ancestors has secured to the age.

But my task is done. All I now ask, is, that although some doubt and mystery hang over the first invention of a steam-boat—in which doubt, however, I for one do not participate—none whatever may exist in regard to the origin of the locomotive branch of the great steam family; and that, in all future time, this fragment of authentic history may enable the latest posterity to retrace, by 'back-track' and 'turn out,' through a long rail-road line of illustrious ancestors, the first projector and contriver of 'The First Locomotive,' their immortal progenitor, 'JABEZ DOOLITTLE, Esq., nigh Wallingford, Connecticut.'



THE FIRST LOCOMOTIVE AGAIN.



THE FIRST LOCOMOTIVE AGAIN.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

I HAVE read with great interest 'THE FIRST LOCOMOTIVE.' It throws light upon an incident which has long been a theme of marvel in the Far West. You must know that I was one among the first band of trappers that crossed the Rocky Mountains. We had encamped one night on a ridge of the Black Hills, and were wrapped up in our blankets, in the midst of our first sleep, when we were roused by the man who stood sentinel, who cried out, 'Wild fire, by ——!' We started on our feet, and beheld a streak of fire coming across the prairies, for all the world like lightning, or a shooting star. We had hardly time to guess what it might be, when it came up, whizzing, and clanking, and making a tremendous racket, and we saw something huge and black, with wheels and traps of all kinds; and an odd-looking being on top of it, busy as they say the devil is in a gale of wind. In fact, some of our people thought it was the old gentleman himself, taking an airing in one of his infernal carriages;

others thought it was the opening of one of the seals in the Revelations. Some of the stoutest fellows fell on their knees, and began to pray; a Kentuckian plucked up courage enough to hail the infernal coachman as he passed, and ask whither he was driving; but the speed with which he whirled by, and the rattling of his machine, prevented our catching more than the last words: 'Slam bang to eternal smash!' In five minutes more, he was across the prairies, beyond the Black Hill, and we saw him shooting, like a jack-a-lantern, over the Rocky Mountains.

The next day we tracked his course. He had cut through a great drove of buffalo, some hundred or two of which lay cut up as though the butchers had been there; we heard of him afterward, driving through a village of Black Feet, and smashing the lodge of the chief, with all his family. Beyond the Rocky Mountains, we could hear nothing more of him; so that we concluded he had ended his brimstone career, by driving into one of the craters that still smoke among the peaks.

This circumstance, I said, has caused much speculation in the Far West; but many set it down as a 'trapper's story,' which is about equivalent to a traveller's tale; neither would the author of 'Astoria' and 'Bonneville's Adventures' admit it into his works, though heaven knows he has not been over squeamish in such matters. The article in your last number, above alluded to, has now cleared up the matter, and henceforth I shall tell the story without fear of being hooted at. I make no doubt, this *supposed infernal apparition* was nothing more nor less

than Jabez Doolittle, with his Locomotive, on his way to Astoria.

‘Who knows, who knows what wastes
He is now careering o’er!’

as the song goes ; perhaps scouring California ; perhaps whizzing away to the North Pole. One thing is certain and satisfactory ; he is the first person that ever crossed the Rocky Mountains on wheels ; his transit shows that those mountains are traversable with carriages, and that it is perfectly easy to have a rail-road to the Pacific. If such road should ever be constructed, I hope, in honor of the great projector who led the way, it may be called the ‘Doolittle Rail-road ;’ unless that name should have been given as characteristic, to some of the many rail-roads already in progress.



THE BLANK BOOK
OF A
COUNTRY SCHOOLMASTER.



THE BLANK BOOK
OF A
COUNTRY SCHOOLMASTER.

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

It is Saturday afternoon. Once more the school-house door has creaked upon its hebdomedal hinges; the dog-eared book yawns upon the deserted desk; the flies are buzzing and bumping their heads against the sunny window; the school-boy is abroad in the woods, and the schoolmaster has laid his birchen sceptre upon the shelf, and with it the cares and solitudes of another week.

Saturday afternoon! Delightful season, when the mind, like a tired artisan, lays down its implements of toil, and leaves the long-accustomed handicraft! How sweet, amid the busy avocations of the week, to look forward to this short interval of repose, when,

for a time at least, the grinding shall cease, and the heart be permitted to indulge its secret longings, and listen to the soft whispers of its own wayward fancies!—Surely the feelings of the school-boy linger around me still. I love the *dolce far niente* of Saturday afternoon!

It is an interlude between the swift-succeeding acts of life—the close of a seven days' journey; a golden clasp, that shuts each weekly volume of our history; a goal, where Time pauses to rest his wing, and turn his glass; a type of that longer interval of rest, when our evening sun shall be going down; when our lengthening shadows shall “point towards morning;” and we shall be looking forward to an eternal Sabbath!

THE HAPPY MAN AND THE LUCKY DOG.

IN this strange world of ours, where each pursues his own golden bubble, and laughs at his neighbor for doing the same, he is the Happy Man, who, blessed with modest ease, a wife and children; sits enthroned in the hearts of his family, and knows no other ambition, than that of making those around him happy. But the Lucky Dog is he, who, free from all domestic cares, saunters up and down his room, in morning gown and slippers; drums on the window of a rainy day, and as he stirs his evening fire, snaps his fingers at the world, and says, ‘I have no wife nor children, good or bad, to provide for.’

/ *Mankind* are like a pendulum; they vibrate from

one extreme to the other. It was so with my friend Quibble, who is now no more. He was taken away in the bloom of life, by a very rapid—widow. Before this untimely event, he was by preëminence *the Bold Bachelor*; the ‘good knight without fear and without reproach,’ as the old chronicles say. He was by birth and by profession a beau; born with a quizzing-glass and a cane. Cock of the walk, he flapped his wings, and crowed among the feathered tribe. But alas! a fair, white partlet, has torn his crest out, and he shall crow no more.

You will generally find him of a morning nosing round a beef-cart, with domestic felicity written in every line of his countenance; and sometimes meet him in a cross-street at noon hurrying homeward, with a beef-steak on a wooden skewer, or a fresh fish, with a piece of tarred twine run through its gills. In the evening he rocks the cradle, and gets up in the night, when the child cries. Like a Goth, of the Dark Ages, he consults his wife on all mighty matters, and looks upon her as a being of more than human goodness and wisdom. In return, she sweetens his coffee for him, puts in his breast-pin, ties his cravat in a bow-knot, and never lets him go out alone after dark. In short, the ladies all say he is a very domestic man, and makes a good husband; which, under the rose, is only a more polite way of saying he is hen-pecked.

Quibble is a Happy Man.

Not so Dribble. He is a sexagenary bachelor, and a Lucky Dog. He has one of those well-oiled dispositions, which turn upon the hinges of the world without creaking. The hey-day of life is over with

him ; but his old age is sunny and chirping ; and a merry heart still nestles in his tottering frame, like a swallow that builds in a tumble-down chimney.

Dribble is a professed Squire of Dames. The rustle of a silk gown is music to his ears, and his imagination is continually lantern-lead by some will-with-a-wisp in the shape of a lady's stomacher. In his devotion to the fair sex—'the muslin,' as he calls it ; he is the 'gentle flower of chivalry.' It is amusing to see how quick he strikes into the scent of a lady's handkerchief. When once fairly in pursuit, there is no such thing as throwing him out. His heart looks out at his eye ; and his inward delight tingles down to the tail of his coat. He loves to bask in the sunshine of a smile ; when he can breathe the sweet atmosphere of kid gloves and cambric handkerchiefs, his soul is in its element ; and his supreme delight is to pass the morning, to use his own quaint language, 'in making dodging calls, and wiggling round among the ladies !'

Dribble is a Lucky Dog !

MIDNIGHT DEVOTION.

IF there be one hour more fitted to devotion than the rest, it is this ; the silent, solemn, solitary hour of midnight in mid-winter. Not a light can be seen in the village—the world is asleep around me. How breathless and how still ! Not air enough to shake down the feathery snow from the branches of the *trees and the leafless vines* at my window !

— THE moon, a Virgin Queen,
 Reigns absolute in her celestial city.
 One lonely star beside the western gate
 Stands sentinel. All else around her throne
 Submissive veil their faces; for in her
 Reflected shine the majesty and light
 Of her departed lord, the glorious sun.
 The air itself is awed into a whisper!
 And yet amid the stillness comes a sound,
 Like the sad music of a muffled drum—
 Distant and indistinct. It is the voice
 Of many waters, down the shelving rock
 Falling, still falling through the silent night,
 Fit music for the solemn march of Time.

FATHER, who art in heaven! With contrite heart
 I bow before thee! Hallowed be thy name!
 I have fled from thee—but thou hast not left me;
 I have scoffed at thee—but thou hast not cursed me:
 I have forsaken thee—yet thou hast blessed me;
 Forgotten thee—yet thou hast loved me still!

INTELLECT.

To be infatuated with the power of one's own intellect, is an accident which seldom happens but to those who are remarkable for the want of intellectual power. Whenever Nature leaves a hole in a person's mind, she generally plasters it over with a thick coat of self-conceit.

IMITATION.

To a careless observer, a shallow mind may sometimes appear profound, by reflecting the higher thoughts of other minds, that stand infinitely above it: even as to the passing eye a drop of water seems

thousands of fathoms deep, by holding within it a reflection of the sky; and yet it is but a drop of water.

AN OBITUARY.

EPITAPHS and obituary notices are not fit themes for merriment; but at times they are so solemnly ludicrous, that sorrow and sadness change into a smile. I have one now before me which commences thus: 'The death of Mr. — cannot fail *to draw a deep chasm* on the society of his numerous friends.' The following is so surpassingly comic, that it seems a figment of a waggish fancy, though I find it in a provincial newspaper; it is no invention of my own. Shakspeare has seldom been so travestied. He little thought, when he made Mark Anthony speak of the 'rent the envious Casca made,' that he should be so misunderstood, as in the following lines:

'The spoiler came. Disease rioted on her vitals; and when she thought to taste again the dear enjoyments of domestic peace, death,—cold, cruel, and relentless death, with *his envious casca*, closed the scene!'

A CURE FOR CELIBACY.

THE following wonderful cure is copied verbatim from the advertisement of a notorious Botanic Physician:

'A lady—deplorable state of mental derangement—attended by the celebrated Dr. —, and by him pronounced beyond the reach of medical aid, and advised *that she be immediately removed to the Insane Hos-*

pital, or Mad House, Pepperell, (Mass.)—cured in one week and *married in three months.*'

SOME poetic lover in the reign of King John, thus quaintly addresses his mistress, whom he calls the fairest maid 'bituene Lyncolne and Lyndeseye:'

WHEN the nightgale singes the wodes waxen grene,
 Lef and gras and bloeme springes in Avril y wene,
 And love is to myn herte gon *with one spere so kene,*
 Nighte and day my blod hit drynkes, my herete doth me tene.

THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

I love at times to turn over the pages of the early Christian Fathers. When I open one of their sombre-looking tomes, and my eye loiters down the long and weather-stained column, something of the same feeling comes over me, as if I were passing along the gloomy aisles of an old cathedral, and listening to the sage monitions of the past. The names of Justin Martin, Tertullian, Lactantius, Origen, Chrysostome, and others, are familiar to our ears; but how few at the present day ever think of looking into their worm-eaten tomes either for delight or instruction! And yet they contain passages of startling eloquence—trains of singular, but close-pressing argument—and touches of ludicrous home-preaching, which remind one of what he has heard and read of Whitfield.

The following specimen of the kind last mentioned, I copy from St. Cyprian, 'Of the habit of Virgins.' Works, part i. pp. 89, 90.

'God, we consider, made not sheep of a purple or a scarlet color; nor was it from his instruction that we were taught to tincture our wool with the juices

of herbs or of fishes ; nor did he form these ranges of pearl and precious stones, which make those necklaces, wherewith the neck, which was truly of his forming, is in a manner covered and hid ; and thus in truth, his workmanship is made to disappear, in favor of an invention of Satan's, which is suffered to dangle over it. Can we think it the will of God, that the ears should be bored and wounded, and poor harmless infants, ignorant as yet of all worldly wickedness, be thereby tormented ? . . . All these mischievous inventions, those wicked spirits introduced among us, who, sinking into the dregs of worldly pollution, lost thereby the vigor of their heavenly state ; and then instructed us, after their deceitful manner, in the arts of blackening our eye-brows, painting our faces, changing the color of our hair, and in short of disguising every feature.

‘Your Lord and Master hath told you, that you cannot make one hair white or black ; but you must needs confute his assertion, and prove yourself capable of doing what he has pronounced impracticable. You presumptuously adventure to dye your hair, and *with a very ill omen to your future condition, you labor to make it flame-colored !* . . . I wonder you are not afraid, that the great divine artist, who made and fashioned you, should refuse to acknowledge you at the general resurrection, and reject you from the hope of his promises, with the sarcasm of a satirist, and the censure of a judge, in some such manner as this which follows : ‘This is none of my workmanship, nor my image ; you have quite altered the countenance which I made for you ; nor hair, nor *face, nor features are the same ; you cannot therefore*

see God, with those eyes which he did not make, but which the devil hath new-colored. Him indeed you have followed, and have taken for your pattern the red and fiery eyes of the serpent ; and since you have taken your 'dress from him, you may e'en take up your abode with him, and dwell together in eternal fire.'"

PLAGIARIST.

WE read in an old story book,—the *Gesta Romanorum*—that a law once prevailed in a certain city, requiring that every knight should be buried in his armor ; and that if any one should rob the grave, and deprive the dead man of his armor, he should suffer death. It once happened, when this city was closely besieged, that a poor cavalier transgressed the law, by borrowing the harness of a dead knight from his sepulchre, and though he thereby saved the city from destruction, he was nevertheless condemned to death, in order to satisfy the noisy populace, who were jealous of his fame. Petrus Berchorius, the putative father of this story, appends a ghostly moral to it. Will it not likewise bear a literary application ? Let the reader say, whether an author who robs the grave, and borrows the weapons of the dead, even to do his country service, does not deserve to be put to death as a literary felon, and is not in danger of suffering such a fate.

POETRY.

HELICON was once a fountain, but has now become a sea ; and he must dive deep, who would search for

pearls of price. How many are contented to play with the pebbles on the shore !

WHERE IS PETER GRIMM ?

(A MID-SUMMER'S DAY-DREAM.)

Two or three years ago—on a lazy, sultry, Saturday afternoon—as I was poring over the columns of a German newspaper, published in Philadelphia, my eye was caught by an advertisement headed :

'Who ist Peter Grimm.'

This singular title struck my fancy by its novelty, and I read on as follows :

'Peter Grimm, from Bingen, on the Rhine, who embarked for America in 1829, is requested to give information concerning his present place of residence. His family and friends are in great anxiety on his account, having received neither letter nor information of any kind from him since his departure. A letter from Bingen for Peter Grimm lies at this office.'

Straightway I fell into a day-dream. What man of feeling would not have done so ? The thermometer stood at 98°, and it was after dinner. Perhaps I was asleep. At all events fancy took wing ; and shadows came and went before my mind's eye, like the shadows of a camera-obscura ; living—moving—well-defined.

Where is Peter Grimm ?

Sure enough, where is he ? Where—who—what is he ? What golden dream allured this solitary wanderer from the father-land—from the glorious Rhine—from the peaceful shades of home ? Bingen ! I well remember Bingen on the Rhine. A beautiful little city, and all around it as green as an emerald ;

placed, too, in the very centre of the most romantic scenery of the whole Rhein-gegend. It leans against the eastern slope of the Rochusberg, with one foot in the waters of the Nahe, and the other in the kingly Rhine. Over against it lie the rich vineyards of Ruedesheim, and Geisenheim and Johannisberg, remembered with a sigh by the lovers of Rhenish flagons. Above, the green meadows of Greifenklau, and the sloping hills of Lange Winkel bask luxuriantly in the sun. Below, the river darts through a narrow pass, dark with overhanging crags, and on every crag the ruins of a castle. O glorious scene! O glorious river Rhine! There stand the towers of the Rossel—there the light and graceful castle of Vogtsberg, perched like a fairy palace in the air; and there—

But where is Peter Grimm?

Sure enough, where is he? How *could* he leave a scene like this? Perhaps he was poor, and not fond of beautiful scenery—belonging to other people. He [cared not for Falkenberg, nor Steinberg, nor Drachenfels, nor Ehrenbreitstein. And, yet how *could* he leave a home like this? Perhaps he took the steam-boat down the Rhine, as I did. Perhaps he did not. Then he lost a pleasant sail upon the most beautiful of rivers; a most lordly and majestic stream, whose rebellious waters, on entering Holland, divide into various channels, and that which bears the name of the Rhine, dwindled to a brook, sinks ere it reaches the sea, being buried, like Captain Kidd's Bible, in the sand. There is a German song, and a fine one too, upon this theme. I once translated it into our vernacular tongue; and thus runs this 'Song of the Rhine.'

FORTH rolled the Rhine-stream strong and deep
 Beneath Helvetia's Alpine steep,
 And joined in youthful company
 Its fellow-travellers to the sea.

In Germany embraced the Rhine,
 The Neckar, the Mosel, the Lahn and the Main,
 And strengthened by each rushing tide,
 Onward he marched in kingly pride.

But soon from his enfeebled grasp
 The satraps of his power,
 The current's flowing veins unclasp—
 He moves in pride no more.

Forth the confederate waters broke
 On that rebellious day,
 And bursting from their monarch's yoke,
 Each chose a separate way.

Whal, Issel, Leck and Wecht, all, all
 Flowed sideways o'er the land,
 And a nameless brook, by Leyden's wall,
 The Rhine sank in the sand.

Doggerel? Did you say doggerel? Then a fig for your taste in poetry. The song is like the stream it celebrates: unequal, sometimes smooth, sometimes rough—but always beautiful. And if it should ever be your lot—

But where is Peter Grimm?

Sure enough, where is he? To be gone so long without sending home any information of his whereabouts, looks rather suspicious. And the whole family, too, in deep anxiety about him. No doubt he left them all in tears—with many promises to write if he could, and if he could not write, to make his mark; and yet up to this date has neither written nor marked—

'Doch hat er nicht geschrieben
 Ob er gesund geblieben.'

No, not a single line to tell whether he is sick or well. Ah, Peter Grimm! Peter Grimm! Your heart must be as hard to move, as Plaffendorferhoehe, or Blick-hobzhaeuserhof is to pronounce. But your friends are less unkind; there is a letter for you. In absence, when seas divide us from our friends; when time as well as distance, cuts us off from those we love; there is no balm for the sick heart like tidings of our home. Next to the pressure of the lip, next to the pressure of the hand, is the unfolding of the white wings of that mysterious little messenger, that comes commissioned by love with tidings of the absent. Sweet is the fountain to the traveller of the desert; sweet is repose to the toil-worn laborer; sweet is the breath of spring after winter's biting winds; sweet are the shades of night after the burthen and heat of the day; but sweeter far than ail, to the stranger in a strange land, is a letter from his home—particularly a letter of credit!

But where is Peter Grimm?

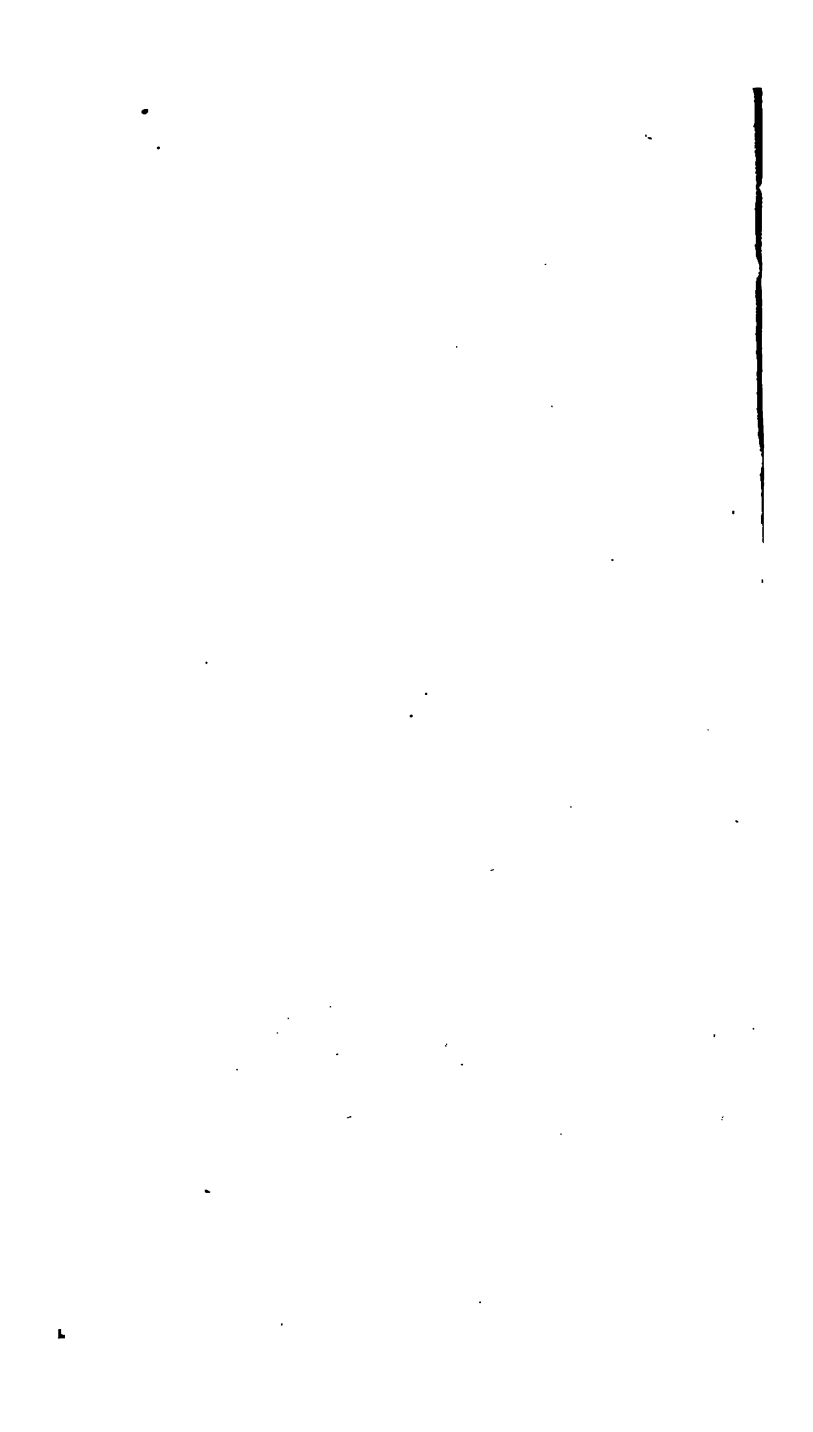
Sure enough, where is he? Perhaps he is in Albany—perhaps he is in Sing-Sing—in the State-prison—or in bed—or in debt—or in liquor, or in 'a claret-colored coat.' Who knows? Perhaps he is quietly smoking his pipe at Lancaster—or in some little village on the banks of the Susquehanna, as quietly reading himself to sleep in the 'Berks County Adler.' Perhaps he is dead and gone—swept away by the cholera. Yes: that accounts for his long silence. The grave tells no tales. He was huddled into it like a malefactor—a handful of earth thrown over him—no tears shed—no bell tolled—no dirge sung. After all, what matters it where or how? 'The way

to heaven is the same from all places, and he that has no grave, has the heavens still over him.' For aught I know, he may have been one of those, who think it easier to die away from home ; for then there are no weeping friends to unman you—no painful leave-taking of those you love ; at most it is only prolonging the separation a little, not commencing it ; and as the Italians say, *Il piu duro passo è quel della soglia*,; the hardest step is that of the threshold. However, if—

But where is Peter Grimm ?

'In his skin ! When he jumps out you may jump in !' answered a voice close by my ear. It broke my day-dream like a thunder-clap ; and yet it was nobody but my old matter-of-fact friend, Mr. Pipkins, a very common-place man, who is always quoting silly sayings, which he learned in his boyhood. He is not half so romantic as I am. Now, I must have been thinking aloud ; in a word, I must have been, where I mean to be again in five minutes from this time, and where I suppose my reader is already—asleep.

THE
EARLY EXPERIENCES
OF
RALPH RINGWOOD.



THE
EARLY EXPERIENCES
OF
RALPH RINGWOOD.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING,

‘I AM a Kentuckian by residence and choice, but a Virginian by birth. The cause of my first leaving the ‘Ancient Dominion,’ and emigrating to Kentucky, was a jackass ! You stare, but have a little patience, and I’ll soon show you how it came to pass. My father, who was of one of the old Virginian families, resided in Richmond. He was a widower, and his domestic affairs were managed by a house-keeper of the old school, such as used to administer the concerns of opulent Virginian households. She was a dignitary that almost rivalled my father in importance, and seemed to think every thing belonged to her ; in fact she was so considerate in her economy, and so careful of expense, as sometimes to vex my

father; who would swear she was disgracing him by her meanness. She always appeared with that ancient insignia of house-keeping trust and authority, a great bunch of keys jingling at her girdle. She superintended the arrangement of the table at every meal, and saw that the dishes were all placed according to her primitive notions of symmetry. In the evening she took her stand and served out tea with a mingled respectfulness and pride of station, truly exemplary. Her great ambition was to have every thing in order, and that the establishment under her sway should be cited as a model of good house-keeping. If any thing went wrong, poor old Barbara would take it to heart, and sit in her room and cry; until a few chapters in the Bible would quiet her spirits, and make all calm again. The Bible, in fact, was her constant resort in time of trouble. She opened it indiscriminately, and whether she chanced among the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the Canticles of Solomon, or the rough enumeration of the tribes in Deuteronomy, a chapter was a chapter, and operated like balm to her soul. Such was our good old housekeeper Barbara: who was destined, unwittingly, to have a most important effect upon my destiny.

‘It came to pass, during the days of my juvenility, while I was yet what is termed ‘an unlucky boy,’ that a gentleman of our neighborhood, a great advocate for experiments and improvements of all kinds, took it into his head that it would be an immense public advantage to introduce a breed of mules, and accordingly imported three jacks to stock the neighborhood. This in a part of the country where the

people cared for nothing but blood horses! Why, Sir! they would have considered their mares disgraced, and their whole stud dishonored, by such a misalliance. The whole matter was a town-talk, and a town scandal. The worthy amalgamator of quadrupeds found himself in a dismal scrape: so he backed out in time, abjured the whole doctrine of amalgamation, and turned his jacks loose to shift for themselves upon the town common. There they used to run about and lead an idle, good-for-nothing, holiday life, the happiest animals in the country.

‘It so happened, that my way to school lay across this common. The first time that I saw one of these animals, it set up a braying and frightened me confoundedly. However, I soon got over my fright, and seeing that it had something of a horse look, my Virginian love for any thing of the equestrian species predominated, and I determined to back it. I accordingly applied at a grocer’s shop, procured a cord that had been round a loaf of sugar, and made a kind of halter; then summoning some of my school-fellows, we drove master Jack about the common until we hemmed him in an angle of a ‘worm fence.’ After some difficulty, we fixed the halter round his muzzle, and I mounted. Up flew his heels, away I went over his head, and off he scampered. However, I was on my legs in a twinkling, gave chase, caught him and remounted. By dint of repeated tumbles, I soon learned to stick to his back, so that he could no more cast me than he could his own skin. From that time, master Jack and his companions had a scampering life of it, for we all rode them between school hours, and on holiday afternoons; and you

may be sure school boys' nags are never permitted to suffer the grass to grow under their feet. They soon became so knowing, that they took to their heels at the very sight of a school-boy; and we were generally much longer in chasing than we were in riding them.

'Sunday approached, on which I projected an equestrian excursion on one of these long-eared steeds. As I knew the jacks would be in great demand on Sunday morning, I secured one over night, and conducted him home, to be ready for an early outset. But where was I to quarter him for the night? I could not put him in the stable: our old black groom George was as absolute in that domain as Barbara was within doors, and would have thought his stable, his horses, and himself disgraced, by the introduction of a jackass. I recollected the smoke-house; an out-building appended to all Virginian establishments for the smoking of hams, and other kinds of meat. So I got the key, put master Jack in, locked the door, returned the key to its place, and went to bed, intending to release my prisoner at an early hour, before any of the family were awake. I was so tired, however, by the exertions I had made in catching the donkey, that I fell into a sound sleep, and the morning broke without my awaking.

'Not so with dame Barbara, the house-keeper. As usual, to use her own phrase, 'she was up before the crow put his shoes on,' and bustled about to get things in order for breakfast. Her first resort was to the smoke-house. Scarce had she opened the door, when master Jack, tired of his confinement, and glad *to be released from darkness*, gave a loud bray, and

rushed forth. Down dropped old Barbara; the animal trampled over her, and made off for the common. Poor Barbara! She had never before seen a donkey, and having read in the Bible that the devil went about like a roaring lion seeking whom he might devour, she took it for granted that this was Beelzebub himself. The kitchen was soon in a hubbub; the servants hurried to the spot. There lay old Barbara in fits; as fast as she got out of one, the thoughts of the devil came over her, and she fell into another, for the good soul was devoutly superstitious.

‘As ill luck would have it, among those attracted by the noise, was a little cursed fidgetty, crabbed uncle of mine; one of those uneasy spirits, that cannot rest quietly in their beds in the morning, but must be up early to bother the household. He was only a kind of half-uncle, after all, for he had married my father’s sister: yet he assumed great authority on the strength of this left-handed relationship, and was a universal intermeddler, and family pest. This prying little busy-body soon ferreted out the truth of the story and discovered, by hook and by crook, that I was at the bottom of the affair, and had locked up the donkey in the smoke-house. He stopped to inquire no farther, for he was one of those testy curmudgeons, with whom unlucky boys are always in the wrong. Leaving old Barbara to wrestle in imagination with the devil, he made for my bed-chamber, where I still lay wrapped in rosy slumbers, little dreaming of the mischief I had done, and the storm about to break over me.

‘In an instant, I was awakened by a shower of thwacks, and started up in wild amazement. I de-

manded the meaning of this attack, but received no other reply than that I had murdered the house-keeper ; while my uncle continued whacking away during my confusion. I seized a poker, and put myself on the defensive. I was a stout boy for my years, while my uncle was a little wiffet of a man ; one that in Kentucky we would not call even an 'individual ;' nothing more than a 'remote circumstance.' I soon, therefore, brought him to a parley, and learned the whole extent of the charge brought against me. I confessed to the donkey and the smoke-house, but pleaded not guilty of the murder of the house-keeper. I soon found out that old Barbara was still alive. She continued under the doctor's hands, however, for several days ; and whenever she had an ill turn, my uncle would seek to give me another flogging. I appealed to my father, but got no redress. I was considered an 'unlucky boy,' prone to all kinds of mischief ; so that prepossessions were against me, in all cases of appeal.

'I felt stung to the soul at all this. I had been beaten, degraded, and treated with slighting when I complained. I lost my usual good spirits and good humor ; and, being out of temper with every body, fancied every body out of temper with me. A certain wild, roving spirit of freedom, which I believe is as inherent in me as it is in the partridge, was brought into sudden activity by the checks and restraints I suffered. 'I'll go from home,' thought I, 'and shift for myself.' Perhaps this notion was quickened by the rage for emigration to Kentucky, which was at that time prevalent in Virginia. I had heard such *stories of the romantic beauties of the country ; of the*

abundance of game of all kinds, and of the glorious independent life of the hunters who ranged its noble forests, and lived by the rifle ; that I was as much agog to get there, as boys who live in sea-ports are to launch themselves among the wonders and adventures of the ocean.

‘ After a time, old Barbara got better in mind and body, and matters were explained to her ; and she became gradually convinced that it was not the devil she had encountered. When she heard how harshly I had been treated on her account, the good old soul was extremely grieved, and spoke warmly to my father in my behalf. He had himself remarked the change in my behaviour, and thought punishment might have been carried too far. He sought, therefore, to have some conversation with me, and to soothe my feelings ; but it was too late. I frankly told him the course of mortification that I had experienced, and the fixed determination I had made to go from home.’

‘ And where do you mean to go ?’

‘ To Kentucky.’

‘ To Kentucky ! Why you know nobody there.’

‘ No matter ; I can soon make acquaintances.’

‘ And what will you do when you get there ?’

‘ Hunt !’

‘ My father gave a long, low whistle, and looked in my face with a serio-comic expression. I was not far in my teens, and to talk of setting off alone for Kentucky, to turn hunter, seemed doubtless the idle prattle of a boy. He was little aware of the dogged resolution of my character ; and his smile of incredulity but fixed me more obstinately in my purpose.

I assured him I was serious in what I said, and would certainly set off for Kentucky in the Spring.

'Month after month passed away. My father now and then adverted slightly to what had passed between us; doubtless for the purpose of sounding me. I always expressed the same grave and fixed determination. By degrees he spoke to me more directly on the subject; endeavoring earnestly but kindly to dissuade me. My only reply was. 'I had made up my mind.'

'Accordingly, as soon as the Spring had fairly opened, I sought him one day in his study, and informed him I was about to set out for Kentucky, and had come to take my leave. He made no objection, for he had exhausted persuasion and remonstrance, and doubtless thought it best to give way to my humor, trusting that a little rough experience would soon bring me home again. I asked money for my journey. He went to a chest, took out a long green silk purse, well filled and laid it on the table. I now asked for a horse and a servant.

'A horse!' said my father, sneeringly: 'why, you would not go a mile without racing him, and breaking your neck; and as to a servant, you cannot take care of yourself, much less of him.'

'How am I to travel, then?'

'Why I suppose you are a man enough to travel on foot.'

'He spoke jestingly, little thinking I would take him at his word; but I was thoroughly piqued in respect to my enterprise; so I pocketed the purse; went to my room, tied up three or four shirts in a *pocket-handkerchief*, put a dirk in my bosom, girt a

couple of pistols round my waist, and felt like a knight-errant armed cap-a-pie, and ready to rove the world in quest of adventures.

‘My sister (I had but one) hung round me and wept, and entreated me to stay. I felt my heart swell in my throat; but I gulped it back to its place, and straightened myself up: I would not suffer myself to cry. I at length disengaged myself from her, and got to the door.’

‘When will you come back?’ cried she.

‘‘Never, by heavens!’ cried I, ‘until I come back a member of congress from Kentucky. I am determined to show that I am not the tail-end of the family.’

‘Such was my first out-set from home. You may suppose what a green-horn I was, and how little I knew of the world I was launching into.

‘I do not recollect any incident of importance, until I reached the borders of Pennsylvania. I had stopped at an inn to get some refreshment; and as I was eating in a back room, I overheard two men in the bar-room conjecture who and what I could be. One determined, at length, that I was a run-away apprentice, and ought to be stopped, to which the other assented. When I had finished my meal, and paid for it, I went out at the back door, lest I should be stopped by my supervisors. Scorning, however, to steal off like a culprit, I walked round to the front of the house. One of the men advanced to the front door. He wore his hat on one side, and had a consequential air that nettled me.

‘Where are you going, youngster?’ demanded he.

‘That’s none of your business!’ replied I, rather pertly.

‘Yes but it is, though! You have run away from home, and must give an account of yourself.’

‘He advanced to seize me, when I drew forth a pistol. ‘If you advance another step, I’ll shoot you!’

‘He sprang back as if he had trodden upon a rattlesnake, and his hat fell off in the movement.

‘Let him alone!’ cried his companion: ‘he’s a foolish, mad-headed boy, and don’t know what he’s about. He’ll shoot you, you may rely on it.’

‘He did not need any caution in the matter; he was afraid even to pick up his hat: so I pushed forward on my way, without molestation. This incident, however, had its effect upon me. I became fearful of sleeping in any house at night, lest I should be stopped. I took my meals in the houses, in the course of the day, but would turn aside at night, into some wood or ravine, make a fire, and sleep before it. This I considered was true hunter’s style, and I wished to inure myself to it.

‘At length I arrived at Brownsville, leg-weary and way-worn, and in a shabby plight, as you may suppose, having been ‘camping out’ for some nights past. I applied at some of the inferior inns, but could gain no admission. I was regarded for a moment with a dubious eye, and then informed they did not receive foot-passengers. At last I went boldly to the principal inn. The landlord appeared as unwilling as the rest to receive a vagrant boy beneath his roof; but his wife interfered, in the midst of his excuses, and half elbowing him aside:

‘*Where are you going, my lad?*’ said she.

‘To Kentucky.’

‘What are you going there for?’

‘To hunt.’

‘She looked earnestly at me for a moment or two.

‘Have you a mother living?’ said she, at length.

‘No, madam : she has been dead for some time.’

‘I thought so!’ cried she, warmly. ‘I knew if you had a mother living, you would not be here.’ From that moment the good woman treated me with a mother’s kindness.’

‘I remained several days beneath her roof, recovering from the fatigue of my journey. While here, I purchased a rifle, and practised daily at a mark, to prepare myself for a hunter’s life. When sufficiently recruited in strength, I took leave of my kind host and hostess, and resumed my journey.

‘At Wheeling I embarked in a flat-bottomed family boat, technically called a broad-horn, a prime river conveyance in those days. In this ark for two weeks I floated down the Ohio. The river was as yet in all its wild beauty. Its loftiest trees had not been thinned out. The forest overhung the water’s edge, and was occasionally skirted by immense cane-brakes. Wild animals of all kinds abounded. We heard them rushing through the thickets, and plashing in the water. Deer and bears would frequently swim across the river; others would come down to the bank, and gaze at the boat as it passed. I was incessantly on the alert with my rifle; but some how or other, the game was never within shot. Sometimes I got a chance to land and try my skill on shore. I shot squirrels, and small birds, and even wild turkeys; but though I caught glimpses of deer

bounding away through the woods, I never could get a fair shot at them.

‘In this way we glided in our broad-horn past Cincinnati, the ‘Queen of the West’ as she is now called ; then a mere group of log cabins ; and the site of the bustling city of Louisville, then designated by a solitary house. As I said before, the Ohio was as yet a wild river ; all was forest, forest, forest ! Near the confluence of Green River with the Ohio, I landed, bade adieu to the broad-horn, and struck for the interior of Kentucky. I had no precise plan ; my only idea was to make for one of the wildest parts of the country. I had relatives in Lexington, and other settled places, to whom I thought it probable my father would write concerning me : so as I was full of manhood and independence, and resolutely bent on making my way in the world without assistance or control, I resolved to keep clear of them all.

‘In the course of my first day’s trudge, I shot a wild-turkey, and slung it on my back for provisions. The forest was open and clear from underwood. I saw deer in abundance, but always running, running. It seemed to me as if these animals never stood still.

‘At length I came to where a gang of half-starved wolves were feasting on the carcass of a deer which they had run down ; and snarling and snapping, and fighting like so many dogs. They were all so ravenous and intent upon their prey, that they did not notice me, and I had time to make my observations. One, larger and fiercer than the rest, seemed to claim the larger share, and to keep the others in awe. If any one came too near him while eating, he would *fly off, seize and shake him*, and then return to his

repast. 'This,' thought I, 'must be the captain ; if I can kill him, I shall defeat the whole army.' I accordingly took aim, fired, and down dropped the old fellow. He might be only shamming dead ; so I loaded and put a second ball through him. He never budged ; all the rest ran off, and my victory was complete.

'It would not be easy to describe my triumphant feelings on this great achievement. I marched on with renovated spirit ; regarding myself as absolute lord of the forest. As night drew near, I prepared for camping. My first care was to collect dry wood and make a roaring fire to cook and sleep by, and to frighten off wolves, and bears, and panthers. I then began to pluck my turkey for supper. I had camped out several times in the early part of my expedition ; but that was in comparatively more settled and civilized regions ; where there were no wild animals of consequence in the forest. This was my first camping out in the real wilderness ; and I was soon made sensible of the loneliness and wildness of my situation.

'In a little while, a concert of wolves commenced : there might have been a dozen or two, but it seemed to me as if there were thousands. I never heard such howling and whining. Having prepared my turkey, I divided it into two parts, thrust two sticks into one of the halves, and planted them on end before the fire, the hunter's mode of roasting. The smell of roast meat quickened the appetites of the wolves, and their concert became truly infernal. They seemed to be all around me, but I could only now and

then get a glimpse of one of them, as he came within the glare of the light.

‘I did not much care for the wolves, who I knew to be a cowardly race, but I had heard terrible stories of panthers, and began to fear their stealthy prowlings in the surrounding darkness. I was thirsty, and heard a brook bubbling and tinkling along at no great distance, but absolutely dared not go there, lest some panther might lie in wait, and spring upon me. By and by a deer whistled. I had never heard one before, and thought it must be a panther. I now felt uneasy lest he might climb the trees, crawl along the branches over head, and plump down upon me ; so I kept my eyes fixed on the branches, until my head ached. I more than once thought I saw fiery eyes glaring down from among the leaves. At length I thought of my supper, and turned to see if my half-turkey was cooked. In crowding so near the fire, I had pressed the meat into the flames, and it was consumed. I had nothing to do but toast the other half, and take better care of it. On that half I made my supper, without salt or bread. I was still so possessed with the dread of panthers, that I could not close my eyes all night, but lay watching the trees until day-break, when all my fears were dispelled with the darkness ; and as I saw the morning sun sparkling down through the branches of the trees, I smiled to think how I had suffered myself to be dismayed by sounds and shadows : but I was a young woodsman, and a stranger in Kentucky.

‘ Having breakfasted on the remainder of my turkey, and slaked my thirst at the bubbling stream, without *farther* dread of panthers, I resumed my wayfaring

with buoyant feelings. I again saw a deer, but as usual running, running ! I tried in vain to get a shot at them, and began to fear I never should. I was gazing with vexation after a herd in full scamper, when I was startled by a human voice. Turning round, I saw a man at a short distance from me, in a hunting-dress.

‘What are you after, my lad ?’ cried he.

‘Those deer ;’ replied I, pettishly ; ‘but it seems as if they never stand still.’

‘Upon that he burst out laughing. ‘Where are you from ?’ said he.

‘From Richmond.’

‘What ! In old Virginny ?’

‘The same.’

‘And how on earth did you get here ?’

‘I landed at Green River from a broad-horn.’

‘And where are your companions ?’

‘I have none.’

‘What ? — all alone ?’

‘Yes.’

‘Where are you going ?’

‘Any where.’

‘And what have you come here for ?’

‘To hunt.’

‘Well,’ said he, laughingly, ‘you ’ll make a real hunter ; there’s no mistaking that !’

‘Have you killed any thing ?’

‘Nothing but a turkey ; I can’t get within shot of a deer : they are always running.’

‘Oh, I’ll tell you the secret of that. You’re always pushing forward and starting the deer at a distance, and gazing at those that are scampering ; but you

must step as slow, and silent, and cautious as a cat, and keep your eyes close around you, and lurk from tree to tree, if you wish to get a chance at deer. But come, go home with me. My name is Bill Smithers; I live not far off: stay with me a little while, and I'll teach you how to hunt.'

'I gladly accepted the invitation of honest Bill Smithers. We soon reached his habitation; a mere log hut, with a square hole for a window, and a chimney made of sticks and clay. Here he lived, with a wife and child. He had 'girdled' the trees for an acre or two around, preparatory to clearing a space for corn and potatoes. In the mean time he maintained his family entirely by his rifle, and I soon found him to be a first-rate huntsman. Under his tutelage received my first effective lessons in 'woodcraft.'

'The more I knew of a hunter's life, the more I relished it. The country, too which had been the promised land of my boyhood, did not, like most promised lands, disappoint me. No wilderness could be more beautiful than this part of Kentucky in those times. The forests were open and spacious, with noble trees, some of which looked as if they had stood for centuries. There were beautiful prairies, too, diversified with groves and clumps of trees, which looked like vast parks, and in which you could see the deer running, at a great distance. In the proper season, these prairies would be covered in many places with wild strawberries, where your horses' hoofs would be dyed to the fet-lock. I thought there could not be another place in the world equal to Kentucky—and I think so still.

'*After I had passed ten or twelve days with Bill*

Smithers, I thought it time to shift my quarters, for his house was scarce large enough for his own family, and I had no idea of being an incumbrance to any one. I accordingly made up my bundle, shouldered my rifle, took a friendly leave of Smithers and his wife, and set out in quest of a Nimrod of the wilderness, one John Miller, who lived alone, nearly forty miles off, and who I hoped would be well pleased to have a hunting companion.

‘I soon found out that one of the most important items in woodcraft, in a new country, was the skill to find one’s way in the wilderness. There were no regular roads in the forests, but they were cut up and perplexed by paths leading in all directions. Some of these were made by the cattle of the settlers, and were called ‘stock-tracks,’ but others had been made by the immense droves of buffaloes which roamed about the country, from the flood until recent times. These were called buffalo-tracks, and traversed Kentucky from end to end, like high-ways. Traces of them may still be seen in uncultivated parts, or deeply worn in the rocks where they crossed the mountains. I was a young woodman, and sorely puzzled to distinguish one kind of track from the other, or to make out my course through this tangled labyrinth.

While thus perplexed, I heard a distant roaring and rushing sound ; a gloom stole over the forest ; on looking up, when I could catch a stray glimpse of the sky, I beheld the clouds rolled up like balls, the lower parts as black as ink. There was now and then an explosion, like a burst of cannonry afar off, and the crash of a falling tree. I had heard of hurricanes in

the woods, and surmised that one was at hand. It soon came crashing its way ; the forest writhing, and twisting, and groaning before it. The hurricane did not extend far on either side, but in a manner ploughed a furrow through the woodland ; snapping off or uprooting trees that had stood for centuries, and filling the air with whirling branches. I was directly in its course, and took my stand behind an immense poplar, six feet in diameter. It bore for a time the full fury of the blast, but at length began to yield. Seeing it falling, I scrambled nimbly, round the trunk like a squirrel. Down it went, bearing down another tree with it. I crept under the trunk as a shelter, and was protected from other trees which fell around me, but was sore all over, from the twigs and branches driven against me by the blast.

‘This was the only incident of consequence that occurred on my way to John Miller’s, where I arrived on the following day, and was received by the veteran with the rough kindness of a backwoodsman. He was a gray-haired man, hardy and weather-beaten, with a blue wart, like a great bead, over one eye, whence he was nicknamed by the hunters, ‘Blue-bead Miller.’ He had been in these parts from the earliest settlements, and had signalized himself in the hard conflicts with the Indians, which gained Kentucky the appellation of ‘the Bloody Ground.’ In one of these fights he had had an arm broken ; in another he had narrowly escaped, when hotly pursued, by jumping from a precipice thirty feet high into a river.

‘Miller willingly received me into his house as an inmate, and seemed pleased with the idea of making a

hunter of me. His dwelling was a small log-house, with a loft or garret of boards, so that there was ample room for both of us. Under his instruction, I soon made a tolerable proficiency in hunting. My first exploit, of any consequence, was killing a bear. I was hunting in company with two brothers, when we came upon the track of Bruin, in a wood, where there was an undergrowth of canes and grape-vines. He was scrambling up a tree, when I shot him through the breast : he fell to the ground, and lay motionless. The brothers sent in their dog, who seized the bear by the throat. Bruin raised one arm, and gave the dog a hug that crushed his ribs. One yell, and all was over. I don't know which was first dead, the dog or the bear. The two brothers sat down and cried like children over their unfortunate dog. Yet they were mere rough huntsmen, almost as wild and untameable as Indians : but they were fine fellows.

‘By degrees I became known, and somewhat of a favorite among the hunters of the neighborhood ; that is to say, men who lived within a circle of thirty or forty miles, and came occasionally to see John Miller, who was a patriarch among them. They lived widely apart, in log-huts and wigwams, almost with the simplicity of Indians, and well nigh as destitute of the comforts and inventions of civilized life. They seldom saw each other ; weeks, and even months would elapse, without their visiting. When they did meet, it was very much after the manner of Indians ; loitering about all day, without having much to say, but becoming communicative as evening advanced, and sitting up half the night before the fire telling hunting stories, and terrible tales of the fights of the *Bloody Ground*.

‘Sometimes several would join in a distant hunting expedition, or rather campaign. Expeditions of this kind lasted from November until April ; during which we laid up our stock of summer provisions. We shifted our hunting-camps from place to place, according as we found the game. They were generally pitched near a run of water, and close by a cane-brake, to screen us from the wind. One side of our lodge was open toward the fire. Our horses were hopped and turned loose in the cane-brakes, with bells round their necks. One of the party staid at home to watch the camp, prepare the meals, and keep off the wolves ; the others hunted. When a hunter killed a deer at a distance from the camp, he would open it and take out the entrails ; then climbing a sapling, he would bend it down, tie the deer to the top, and let it spring up again, so as to suspend the carcass out of reach of the wolves. At night he would return to the camp, and give an account of his luck. The next morning early he would get a horse out of the cane-brake and bring home his game. That day he would stay at home to cut up the carcass while the others hunted.

‘Our days were thus spent in silent and lonely occupations. It was only at night that we would gather together before the fire, and be sociable. I was a novice, and used to listen with open eyes and ears to the strange and wild stories told by the old hunters, and believed every thing I heard. Some of their stories bordered upon the supernatural. They believed that their rifles might be spell-bound, so as not to be able to kill a buffalo, even at arm’s length. This *superstition* they had derived from the Indians, who

often thnik the white hunters have laid a spell upon their rifles. Miller partook of this superstition, and used to tell of his rifle's having a spell upon it ; but it often seemed to me to be a shuffling way of accounting for a bad shot. If a hunter grossly missed his aim, he would ask, 'Who shot last with this rifle?'—and hint that he must have charmed it. The sure mode to disenchant the gun, was to shoot a silver bullet out of it.

'By the opening of Spring we would generally have quantities of bear's-meat and venison salted, dried, and smoked, and numerous packs of skins. We would then make the best of our way home from our distant-hunting grounds ; transporting our spoils, sometimes in canoes along the rivers, sometimes on horse-back over land, and our return would often be celebrated by feasting and dancing, in true backwoods style. I have given you some idea of our hunting ; let me now give you a sketch of our frolicking.

'It was on our return from a winter's hunting in the neighborhood of Green River, when we received notice that there was to be a grand frolic at Bob Mosely's, to greet the hunters. This Bob Mosely was a prime fellow throughout the country. He was an indifferent hunter, it is true, and rather lazy, to boot ; but then he could play the fiddle, and that was enough to make him of consequence. There was no other man within a hundred miles that could play the fiddle, so there was no having a regular frolic without Bob Mosely. The hunters, therefore, were always ready to give him a share of their game in exchange for his music, and Bob was always ready to get up a carousal, whenever their was a party re-

turning from a hunting expedition. The present frolic was to take place at Bob Mosely's own house, which was on the Pigeon Roost Fork of the Muddy, which is a branch of Rough Creek, which is a branch of Green River.

'Every body was agog for the revel at Bob Mosely's; and as all the fashion of the neighborhood was to be there, I thought I must brush up for the occasion. My leathern hunting-dress, which was the only one I had, was somewhat the worse for wear, it is true, and considerably jappanned with blood and grease; but I was up to hunting expedients. Getting into a periogue, I paddled off to a part of the Green River where there was sand and clay, that might serve for soap; then taking off my dress, I scrubbed and scoured it, until I thought it looked very well. I then put it on the end of a stick, and hung it out of the periogue to dry, while I stretched myself very comfortably on the green bank of the river. Unluckily a flaw struck the periogue, and tipped over the stick: down went my dress to the bottom of the river, and I never saw it more. Here was I, left almost in a state of nature. I managed to make a kind of Robinson Crusoe garb of undressed skins, with the hair on, which enabled me to get home with decency; but my dream of gayety and fashion was at an end; for how could I think of figuring in high life at the Pigeon Roost, equipped like a mere Orson?

'Old Miller, who really began to take some pride in me, was confounded when he understood that I did not intend to go to Bob Mosely's; but when I told him my misfortune, and that I had no dress: 'By the

powers,' cried he, 'but you *shall* go, and you shall be the best dressed and the best mounted lad there !'

'He immediately set to work to cut out and make up a hunting-shirt, of dressed deer-skin, gaily fringed at the shoulders, with leggins of the same, fringed from hip to heel. He then made me a rakish raccoon-cap, with a flaunting tail to it; mounted me on his best horse; and I may say, without vanity, that I was one of the smartest fellows that figured on that occasion, at the Pigeon-Roost Fork of the Muddy.

'It was no small occasion, either, let me tell you. Bob Mosely's house was a tolerable large bark shanty, with a clap-board roof; and there were assembled all the young hunters and pretty girls of the country, for many a mile round. The young men were in their best hunting-dresses, but not one could compare with mine; and my raccoon-cap, with its flowing tail, was the admiration of every body. The girls were mostly in doe-skin dresses; for there was no spinning and weaving as yet in the woods; nor any need of it. I never saw girls that seemed to me better dressed; and I was somewhat of a judge, having seen fashions at Richmond. We had a hearty dinner, and a merry one; for there was Jemmy Kiel, famous for raccoon hunting, and Bob Tarleton, and Wesley Pigman, and Joe Taylor, and several other prime fellows for a frolic, that made all ring again, and laughed, that you might have heard them a mile.

'After dinner, we began dancing, and were hard at it, when, about three o'clock in the afternoon, there was a new arrival — the two daughters of old Simon Schultz; the two young ladies that affected fashion and late hours. Their arrival had nearly put an end

to all our merriment. I must go a little round about in my story, to explain to you how that happened.

‘As old Schultz, the father, was one day looking in the cane-brakes for his cattle, he came upon the track of horses. He knew they were none of his, and that none of his neighbors had horses about that place. They must be stray horses ; or must belong to some traveller who had lost his way, as the track led no where. He accordingly followed it up, until he came to an unlucky pedlar, with two or three pack-horses, who had been bewildered among the cattle-tracks, and had wandered for two or three days among woods and cane-brakes, until he was almost famished.

‘Old Schultz brought him to his house ; fed him on venison, bear’s meat, and hominy, and at the end of a week put him in prime condition. The pedlar could not sufficiently express his thankfulness ; and when about to depart, inquired what he had to pay ? Old Schultz stepped back with surprise. ‘Stranger,’ said he, ‘you have been welcome under my roof. I’ve given you nothing but wild meat and hominy, because I had no better, but have been glad of your company. You are welcome to stay as long as you please. But by Zounds ! if any one offers to pay Simon Schultz for food, he affronts him !’ So saying, he walked out in a huff.

‘The pedlar admired the hospitality of his host, but could not reconcile it to his conscience to go away without making some recompense. There were honest Simon’s two daughters, two strapping, red-haired girls. He opened his packs and displayed riches *before them of which they had no conception ; for in*

those days there were no country stores in those parts, with their artificial finery and trinketry ; and this was the first pedlar that had wandered into that part of the wilderness. The girls were for a time completely dazzled, and knew not what to choose ; but what caught their eyes most, were two looking-glasses, about the size of a dollar, set in gilt tin. They had never seen the like before, having used no other mirror than a pail of water. The pedlar presented them these jewels, without the least hesitation : nay, he gallantly hung them round their necks by red ribbands, almost as fine as the glasses themselves. This done, he took his departure, leaving them as much astonished as two princesses in a fairy tale, that had received a magic gift from an enchanter.

‘It was with these looking-glasses, hung round their necks as lockets, by red ribbands, that old Schultz’s daughters made their appearance at three o’clock in the afternoon, at the frolic at Bob Mosely’s, on the Pigeon-Roost Fork of the Muddy.

‘By the powers, but it was an event ! Such a thing had never before been seen in Kentucky. Bob Tarleton, a strapping fellow, with a head like a chestnut-burr, and a look like a boar in an apple orchard, stepped up, caught hold of the looking-glass of one of the girls, and gazing at it for a moment, cried out :

‘Joe Taylor, come here ! come here ! I’ll be darn’d if Patty Schultz aint got a locket that you can see your face in, as clear as in a spring of water !’

‘In a twinkling all the young hunters gathered round old Schultz’s daughters. I, who knew what looking-glasses were, did not budge. Some of the girls who sat near me were excessively mortified at

finding themselves thus deserted. I heard Peggy Pugh say to Sally Pigman, 'Goodness knows, it's well Schultz's daughters is got them things round their necks, for it's the first time the young men crowded round them !'

'I saw immediately the danger of the case. We were a small community, and could not afford to be split up by feuds. So I stepped up to the girls, and whispered to them : 'Polly,' said I, 'those lockets are powerful fine, and become you amazingly ; but you don't consider that the country is not advanced enough in these parts for such things. You and I understand these matters, but these people don't. Fine things like these may do very well in the old settlements, but they wont answer at the Pigeon-Roost Fork of the Muddy.' You had better lay them aside for the present, or we shall have no peace.'

'Polly and her sister luckily saw their error ; they took off the lockets, laid them aside, and harmony was restored : otherwise, I verily believe there would have been an end of our community. Indeed, notwithstanding the great sacrifice they made on this occasion, I do not think old Schultz's daughters were ever much liked afterward among the young women.

'This was the first time that looking-glasses were ever seen in the Green River part of Kentucky.

'I had now lived some time with old Miller, and had become a tolerably expert hunter. Game, however, began to grow scarce. The buffalo had gathered together, as if by universal understanding, and had crossed the Mississippi, never to return. Strangers kept pouring into the country, clearing away the forests, and building in all directions. The hunters

began to grow restive. Jemmy Kiel, the same of whom I have already spoken for his skill in raccoon catching, came to me one day: 'I can't stand this any longer,' said he; 'we're getting too thick here. Simon Schultz crowds me so, that I have no comfort of my life.'

'Why how you talk!' said I; 'Simon Schultz lives twelve miles off.'

'No matter; his cattle run with mine, and I've no idea of living where another man's cattle can run with mine. That's too close neighborhood; I want elbow-room. This country, too, is growing too poor to live in; there's no game: so two or three of us have made up our minds to follow the buffalo to the Missouri, and we should like to have you of the party. Other hunters of my acquaintance talked in the same manner. This set me thinking; but the more I thought, the more I was perplexed. I had no one to advise with: old Miller and his associates knew but of one mode of life, and I had had no experience in any other: but I had a wide scope of thought. When out hunting alone, I used to forget the sport, and sit for hours together on the trunk of a tree, with rifle in hand, buried in thought, and debating with myself: 'Shall I go with Jemmy Kiel and his company, or shall I remain here? If I remain here, there will soon be nothing left to hunt; but am I to be a hunter all my life? Have not I something more in me, than to be carrying a rifle on my shoulder, day after day, and dodging about after bears, and deer, and other brute beasts? My vanity told me I had; and I called to mind my boyish boast to my sister, that I would never return home, until I return-

ed a member of congress from Kentucky; but was this the way to fit myself for such a station?

‘Various plans passed through my mind, but they were abandoned almost as soon as formed. At length I determined on becoming a lawyer. True it is, I knew almost nothing. I had left school before I had learnt beyond the ‘rule of three.’ ‘Never mind,’ said I to myself, resolutely; ‘I am a terrible fellow for hanging on to any thing, when I’ve once made up my mind; and if a man has but ordinary capacity, and will set to work with heart and soul, and stick to it, he can do almost any thing.’ With this maxim, which has been pretty much my mainstay throughout life, I fortified myself in my determination to attempt the law. But how was I to set about it? I must quit this forest life, and go to one or other of the towns, where I might be able to study, and to attend the courts. This too required funds. I examined into the state of my finances. The purse given me by my father had remained untouched, in the bottom of an old chest up in the loft, for money was scarcely needed in these parts. I had bargained away the skins acquired in hunting, for a horse and various other matters, on which, in case of need, I could raise funds. I therefore thought I could make shift to maintain myself until I was fitted for the bar.

‘I informed my worthy host and patron, old Miller, of my plan. He shook his head at my turning my back upon the woods, when I was in a fair way of making a first-rate hunter; but he made no effort to dissuade me. I accordingly set off in September, *on horseback*, intending to visit Lexington, Frankfort,

and other of the principal towns, in search of a favorable place to prosecute my studies. My choice was made sooner than I expected. I had put up one night at Bardstown, and found, on inquiry, that I could get comfortable board and accommodation in a private family for a dollar and half a week. I liked the place, and resolved to look no farther. So the next morning I prepared to turn my face homeward, and take my final leave of forest life.

‘I had taken my breakfast, and was waiting for my horse, when, in pacing up and down the piazza, I saw a young girl seated near a window, evidently a visiter. She was very pretty ; with auburn hair, and blue eyes, and was dressed in white. I had seen nothing of the kind since I had left Richmond ; and at that time I was too much of a boy to be much struck by female charms. She was so delicate and dainty-looking, so different from the hale, buxom, brown girls of the woods ; and then her white dress ! it was perfectly dazzling ! Never was poor youth more taken by surprise, and suddenly bewitched. My heart yearned to know her ; but how was I to accost her ? I had grown wild in the woods, and had none of the habitudes of polite life. Had she been like Peggy Pugh, or Sally Pigman, or any other of my leathern-dressed belles of the Pigeon-Roost, I should have approached her without dread ; nay, had she been as fair as Schultz’s daughters, with their looking-glass lockets, I should not have hesitated : but that white dress, and those auburn ringlets, and blue eyes, and delicate looks, quite daunted, while they fascinated me. I don’t know what put it into my head, but I thought, all at once, that I would kiss her !

- It would take a long acquaintance to arrive at such a boon, but I might seize upon it by sheer robbery. Nobody knew me here. I would just step in, snatch a kiss, mount my horse, and ride off. She would not be the worse for it ; and that kiss—oh ! I should die if I did not get it !

‘I gave no time for the thought to cool, but entered the house, and stepped lightly into the room. She was seated with her back to the door, looking out at the window, and did not hear my approach. I tapped her chair, and as she turned and looked up, I snatched as sweet a kiss as ever was stolen, and vanished in a twinkling. The next moment I was on horseback, galloping homeward ; my very ears tingling at what I had done.

‘On my return home, I sold my horse, and turned every thing to cash ; and found, with the remains of the paternal purse, that I had nearly four hundred dollars ; a little capital, which I resolved to manage with the strictest economy.

‘It was hard parting with old Miller, who had been like a father to me : it cost me, too, something of a struggle to give up the free, independent wild-wood life I had hitherto led ; but I had marked out my course, and have never been one to flinch or turn back.

‘I footed it sturdily to Bardstown ; took possession of the quarters for which I had bargained, shut myself up, and set to work with might and main, to study. But what a task I had before me ! I had every thing to learn ; not merely law, but all the elementary branches of knowledge. I read and read, for sixteen hours out of the four-and-twenty ; but the

more I read, the more I became aware of my own ignorance, and shed bitter tears over my deficiency. It seemed as if the wilderness of knowledge expanded and grew more perplexed as I advanced. Every height gained, only revealed a wider region to be traversed, and nearly filled me with despair. I grew moody, silent, and unsocial, but studied on doggedly and incessantly. The only person with whom I held any conversation, was the worthy man in whose house I was quartered. He was honest and well-meaning, but perfectly ignorant, and I believe would have liked me much better, if I had not been so much addicted to reading. He considered all books filled with lies and impositions, and seldom could look into one, without finding something to rouse his spleen. Nothing put him into a greater passion, than the assertion that the world turned on its own axis every four-and-twenty hours. He swore it was an outrage upon common sense. 'Why, if it did,' said he, 'there would not be a drop of water in the well, by morning, and all the milk and cream in the dairy would be turned topsy turvy ! And then to talk of the earth going round the sun ! 'How do they know it ?' I've seen the sun rise every morning, and set every evening, for more than thirty years. They must not talk to *me* about the earth's going round the sun !

'At another time he was in a perfect fret at being told the distance between the sun and moon. 'How can any one tell the distance?' cried he. 'Who surveyed it? who carried the chain? By Jupiter! they only talk this way before me to annoy me. But then there's some people of sense who give in to this

cursed humbug! 'There's Judge Broadnax, now, one of the best lawyers we have; is n't it surprising he should believe in such stuff? Why, Sir, the other day I heard him talk of the distance from a star he called Mars to the sun! He must have got it out of one or other of those confounded books he's so fond of reading; a book some impudent fellow has written, who knew nobody could swear the distance was more or less.'

'For my own part, feeling my own deficiency in scientific lore, I never ventured to unsettle his conviction that the sun made his daily circuit round the earth; and for aught I said to the contrary, he lived and died in that belief.

'I had been about a year at Bardstown, living thus studiously and reclusely, when, as I was one day walking the street, I met two young girls, in one of whom I immediately recalled the little beauty whom I had kissed so impudently. She blushed up to the eyes, and so did I; but we both passed on without farther sign of recognition. This second glimpse of her, however, caused an odd fluttering about my heart. I could not get her out of my thoughts for days. She quite interfered with my studies. I tried to think of her as a mere child, but it would not do: she had improved in beauty, and was tending toward womanhood; and then I myself was but little better than a stripling. However, I did not attempt to seek after her, or even to find out who she was, but returned doggedly to my books. By degrees she faded from my thoughts, or if she did cross them occasionally, it was only to increase my despondency; for I feared that with all my exertions, I should never be

able to fit myself for the bar, or enable myself to support a wife.

‘Onē cold stormy evening I was seated, in dumpish mood, in the bar-room of the inn, looking into the fire, and turning over uncomfortable thoughts, when I was accosted by some one who had entered the room without my perceiving it. I looked up, and saw before me a tall, and, as I thought, pompous-looking man, arrayed in small clothes and knee-buckles, with powdered head, and shoes nicely blacked and polished; a style of dress unparalleled in those days, in that rough country. I took a pique against him from the very portliness of his appearance, and stateliness of his manner, and bristled up as he accosted me. He demanded if my name was not Ringwood.

‘I was startled, for I supposed myself perfectly incog.; but I answered in the affirmative.

‘Your family, I believe, lives in Richmond.’

‘My gorge began to rise. ‘Yes, Sir,’ replied I, sulkily, ‘my family does live in Richmond.’

‘And what, may I ask, has brought you into this part of the country?’

‘Zounds, Sir!’ cried I, starting on my feet, ‘what business is it of yours? How dare you to question me in this manner?’

‘The entrance of some persons prevented a reply; but I walked up and down the bar-room, fuming with conscious independence and insulted dignity, while the pompous-looking personage, who had thus trespassed upon my spleen, retired without proffering another word.

‘The next day, while seated in my room, some one

tapped at the door, and, on being bid to enter, the stranger in the powdered head, small-clothes, and shining shoes and buckles, walked in with ceremonious courtesy.

‘My boyish pride was again in arms; but he subdued me. He was formal, but kind and friendly. He knew my family, and understood my situation, and the dogged struggle I was making. A little conversation, when my jealous pride was once put to rest, drew every thing from me. He was a lawyer of experience, and of extensive practice, and offered at once to take me with him, and direct my studies. The offer was too advantageous and gratifying not to be immediately accepted. From that time I began to look up. I was put into a proper track, and was enabled to study to a proper purpose. I made acquaintance, too, with some of the young men of the place, who were in the same pursuit, and was encouraged at finding that I could ‘hold my own’ in argument with them. We instituted a debating club, in which I soon became prominent and popular. Men of talents, engaged in other pursuits, joined it, and this diversified our subjects, and put me on various tracks of inquiry. Ladies, too, attended some of our discussions, and this gave them a polite tone, and had an influence on the manners of the debaters. My legal patron also may have had a favorable effect in correcting any roughness contracted in my hunter’s life. He was calculated to bend me in an opposite direction, for he was of the old school; quoted Chesterfield on all occasions, and talked of Sir Charles Grandison, who was his beau ideal. It was Sir Charles *Grandison*, however, Kentuckyized.

‘I had always been fond of female society. My experience, however, had hitherto been among the rough daughters of the backwoodsmen; and I felt an awe of young ladies in ‘store clothes,’ and delicately brought up. Two or three of the married ladies of Bardstown, who had heard me at the debating club, determined that I was a genius, and undertook to bring me out. I believe I really improved under their hands; became quiet where I had been shy or sulky, and easy where I had been impudent.

‘I called to take tea one evening with one of these ladies, when to my surprise, and somewhat to my confusion, I found with her the identical blue-eyed little beauty whom I had so audaciously kissed. I was formally introduced to her, but neither of us betrayed any sign of previous acquaintance, except by blushing to the eyes. While tea was getting ready, the lady of the house went out of the room to give some directions, and left us alone.

‘Heavens and earth, what a situation! I would have given all the pittance I was worth, to have been in the deepest dell of the forest. I felt the necessity of saying something in excuse of my former rudeness, but I could not conjure up an idea, nor utter a word. Every moment matters were growing worse. I felt at one time tempted to do as I had done when I robbed her of the kiss: bolt from the room, and take to flight; but I was chained to the spot, for I really longed to gain her good will.’

‘At length I plucked up courage, on seeing that she was equally confused with myself, and walking desperately up to her, I exclaimed:

‘I have been trying to muster up something to say

to you, but I cannot. I feel that I am in a horrible scrape. Do have pity on me, and help me out of it !

‘A smile dimpled about her mouth, and played among the blushes of her cheek. She looked up with a shy but arch glance of the eye, that expressed a volume of comic recollection ; we both broke into a laugh, and from that moment all went on well.

‘A few evenings afterward, I met her at a dance, and prosecuted the acquaintance. I soon became deeply attached to her ; paid my court regularly ; and before I was nineteen years of age, had engaged myself to marry her. I spoke to her mother, a widow lady, to ask her consent. She seemed to demur ; upon which, with my customary haste, I told her there would be no use in opposing the match, for if her daughter chose to have me, I would take her, in defiance of her family, and the whole world.

‘She laughed, and told me I need not give myself any uneasiness ; would be no unreasonable opposition. She knew my family and all about me. The only obstacle was, that I had no means of supporting a wife, and she had nothing to give with her daughter.

‘No matter ; at that moment every thing was bright before me. I was in one of my sanguine moods. I feared nothing, doubted nothing. So it was agreed that I should prosecute my studies, obtain a license, and as soon as I should be fairly launched in business, we would be married.

‘I now prosecuted my studies with redoubled ardor, and was up to my ears in law when I received a letter from my father, who had heard of me and my whereabouts. He applauded the course I had

taken, but advised me to lay a foundation of general knowledge, and offered to defray my expenses, if I would go to college. I felt the want of a general education, and was staggered with this offer. It militated somewhat against the self-dependant course I had so proudly, or rather conceitedly, marked out for myself, but it would enable me to enter more advantageously upon my legal career. I talked over the matter with the lovely girl to whom I was engaged. She sided in opinion with my father, and talked so disinterestedly, yet tenderly, that if possible, I loved her more than ever. I reluctantly, therefore, agreed to go to college for a couple of years, though it must necessarily postpone our union.

‘Scarcely had I formed this resolution, when her mother was taken ill, and died, leaving her without a protector. This again altered all my plans. I felt as if I could protect her. I gave up all idea of collegiate studies; persuaded myself that by dint of industry and application I might overcome the deficiencies of education, and resolved to take out a license as soon as possible.

‘That very autumn I was admitted to the bar, and within a month afterward, was married. We were a young couple; she not much above sixteen, I not quite twenty; and both almost without a dollar in the world. The establishment which we set up was suited to our circumstances: a log-house, with two small rooms; a bed, a table, a half dozen chairs, a half dozen knives and forks, a half dozen spoons; every thing by half dozens; a little delft ware; every thing in a small way: we were so poor, but then so happy!

'We had not been married many days, when court was held at a county town, about twenty-five miles distant. It was necessary for me to go there, and put myself in the way of business: but how was I to go? I had expended all my means on our establishment; and then, it was hard parting with my wife, so soon after marriage. However, go I must. Money must be made, or we should soon have the wolf at the door. I accordingly borrowed a horse, and borrowed a little cash, and rode off from my door, leaving my wife standing at it, and waving her hand after me. Her last look so sweet and beaming, went to my heart. I felt as if I could go through fire and water for her.

'I arrived at the county town, on a cool October evening. The inn was crowded, for the court was to commence on the following day. I knew no one, and wondered how I, a stranger, and a mere youngster, was to make my way in such a crowd, and to get business. The public room was thronged with the idlers of the country, who gather together on such occasions. There was some drinking going forward, with much noise, and a little altercation. Just as I entered the room, I saw a rough bully of a fellow, who was partly intoxicated, strike an old man. He came swaggering by me, and elbowed me as he passed. I immediately knocked him down, and kicked him into the street. I needed no better introduction. In a moment I had a dozen rough shakes of the hand, and invitations to drink, and found myself quite a personage in this rough assembly.

'The next morning the court opened. I took my seat among the lawyers, but felt as a mere spectator,

not having a suit in progress or prospect, nor having any idea where business was to come from. In the course of the morning, a man was put at the bar, charged with passing counterfeit money, and was asked if he was ready for trial. He answered in the negative. He had been confined in a place where there were no lawyers, and had not had an opportunity of consulting any. He was told to choose counsel from the lawyers present, and to be ready for trial on the following day. He looked round the court, and selected me. I was thunder-struck. I could not tell why he should make such a choice. I, a beardless youngster; unpractised at the bar; perfectly unknown. I felt diffident yet delighted, and could have hugged the rascal.

‘Before leaving the court, he gave me one hundred dollars in a bag, as a retaining fee. I could scarcely believe my senses; it seemed like a dream. The heaviness of the fee spoke but lightly in favor of his innocence, but that was no affair of mine. I was to be advocate, not judge, nor jury. I followed him to jail, and learned from him all the particulars of his case: from thence I went to the clerk’s office, and took minutes of the indictment. I then examined the law on the subject, and prepared my brief in my room. All this occupied me until midnight, when I went to bed, and tried to sleep. It was all in vain. Never in my life was I more wide awake. A host of thoughts and fancies kept rushing through my mind: the shower of gold that had so unexpectedly fallen into my lap; the idea of my poor little wife at home, that I was to astonish with my good fortune! But then the awful responsibility I had undertaken!—to

speak for the first time in a strange court ; the expectations the culprit had evidently formed of my talents ; all these, and a crowd of similar notions, kept whirling through my mind. I tossed about all night, fearing the morning would find me exhausted and incompetent ; in a word, the day dawned on me, a miserable fellow !

‘I got up feverish and nervous. I walked out before breakfast, striving to collect my thoughts, and tranquillize my feelings. It was a bright morning ; the air was pure and frosty. I bathed my forehead and my hands in a beautiful running stream ; but I could not allay the fever heat that raged within. I returned to breakfast, could not eat. A single cup of coffee formed my repast. It was time to go to court, and I went there with a throbbing heart. I believe if it had not been for the thoughts of my little wife, in her lonely log-house, I should have given back to the man his hundred dollars, and relinquished the cause. I took my seat, looking, I am convinced, more like a culprit than the rogue I was to defend.

When the time came for me to speak, my heart died within me. I rose embarrassed and dismayed, and stammered in opening my cause. I went on from bad to worse, and felt as if I was going down hill. Just then the public prosecutor, a man of talents, but somewhat rough in his practice, made a sarcastic remark on something I had said. It was like an electric spark, and ran tingling through every vein in my body. In an instant my diffidence was gone. My whole spirit was in arms. I answered with promptness and bitterness, for I felt the cruelty *of such an attack upon a novice in my situation.*

The public prosecutor made a kind of apology: this, from a man of his redoubted powers, was a vast concession. I renewed my argument with a fearless glow; carried the case through triumphantly, and the man was acquitted.

‘This was the making of me. Every body was curious to know who this new lawyer was, that had thus suddenly risen among them, and bearded the attorney-general at the very outset. The story of my début at the inn, on the preceding evening, when I had knocked down a bully, and kicked him out of doors for striking an old man, was circulated, with favorable exaggerations. Even my very beardless chin and juvenile countenance were in my favor, for people gave me far more credit than I really deserved. The chance business which occurs in our country courts came thronging upon me. I was repeatedly employed in other causes; and by Saturday night, when the court closed, and I had paid my bill at the inn, I found myself with an hundred and fifty dollars in silver, three hundred dollars in notes, and a horse that I afterward sold for two hundred dollars more.

‘Never did miser gloat on his money with more delight. I locked the door of my room; piled the money in a heap upon the table; walked round it; sat with my elbows on the table, and my chin upon my hands, and gazed upon it. Was I thinking of the money? No! I was thinking of my little wife at home. Another sleepless night ensued; but what a night of golden fancies, and splendid air-castles! As soon as morning dawned, I was up, mounted the borrowed horse with which I had come to court, and

led the other, which I had received as a fee. ' All the way I was delighting myself with the thoughts of the surprise I had in store for my little wife ; for both of us had expected nothing but that I should spend all the money I had borrowed, and should return in debt.

' Our meeting was joyous, as you may suppose : but I played the part of the Indian hunter, who, when he returns from the chase, never for a time speaks of his success. She had prepared a snug little rustic meal for me, and while it was getting ready, I seated myself at an old fashioned desk in one corner, and began to count over my money, and put it away. She came to me before I had finished, and asked who I had collected the money for.

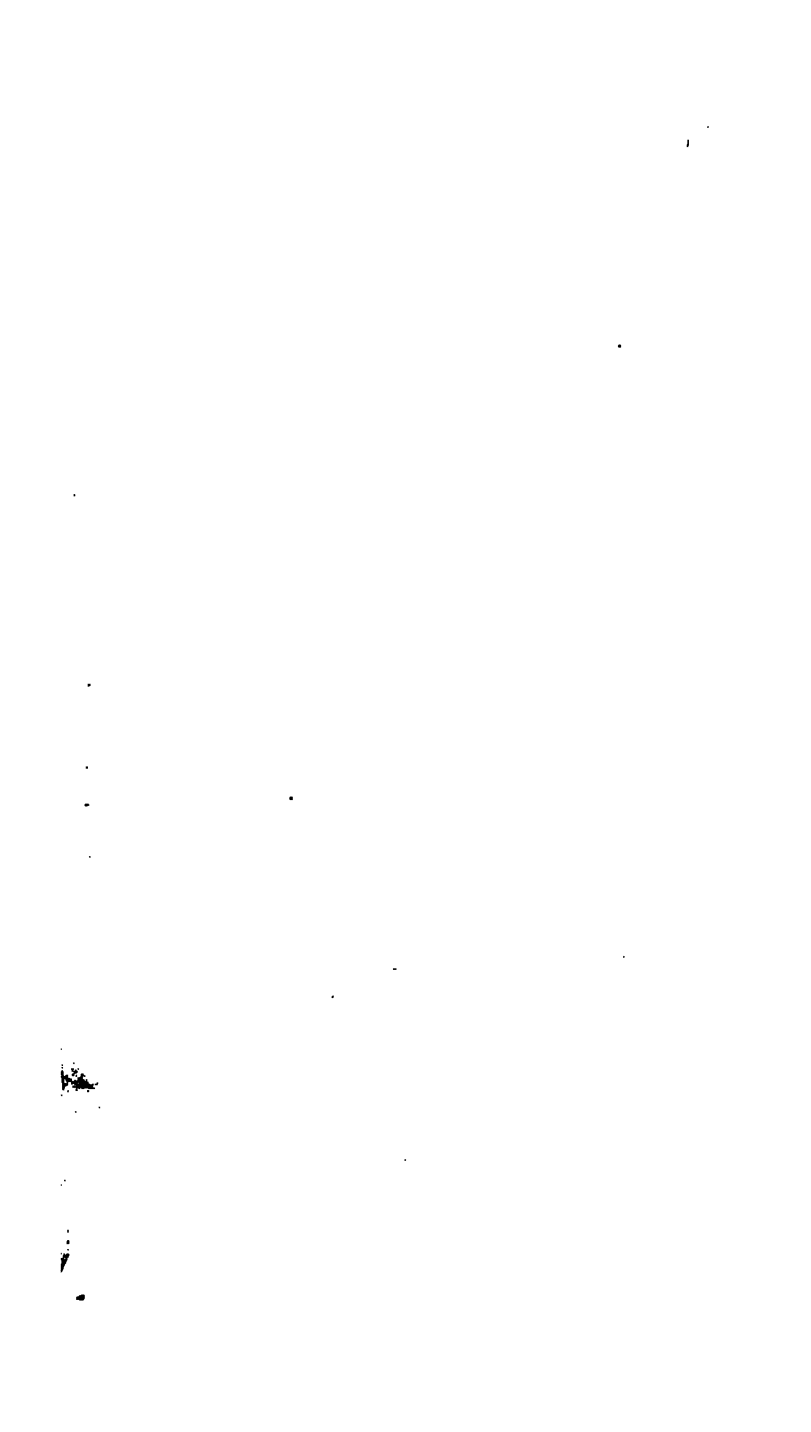
' For myself, to be sure,' replied I, with affected coolness ; ' I made it at court.'

' She looked me for a moment in the face, incredulously. I tried to keep my countenance, and to play Indian, but it would not do. My muscles began to twitch ; my feelings all at once gave way. I caught her in my arms ; laughed, cried, and danced about the room, like a crazy man. From that time forward, we never wanted for money.

' I had not been long in successful practice, when I was surprised one day by a visit from my woodland patron, old Miller. The tidings of my prosperity had reached him in the wilderness, and he had walked one hundred and fifty miles on foot to see me. By that time I had improved my domestic establishment, and had all things comfortable about me. He looked around him with a wondering eye, at what *he considered* luxuries and superfluities ; but sup-

posed they were all right, in my altered circumstances. He said he did not know, upon the whole, but that I had acted for the best. It is true, if game had continued plenty, it would have been a folly for me to quit a hunter's life; but hunting was pretty nigh done up in Kentucky. The buffalo had gone to Missouri; the elk were nearly gone also; deer, too, were growing scarce; they might last out his time, as he was growing old, but they were not worth setting up life upon. He had once lived on the borders of Virginia. Game grew scarce there; he followed it up across Kentucky, and now it was again giving him the slip; but he was too old to follow it farther.

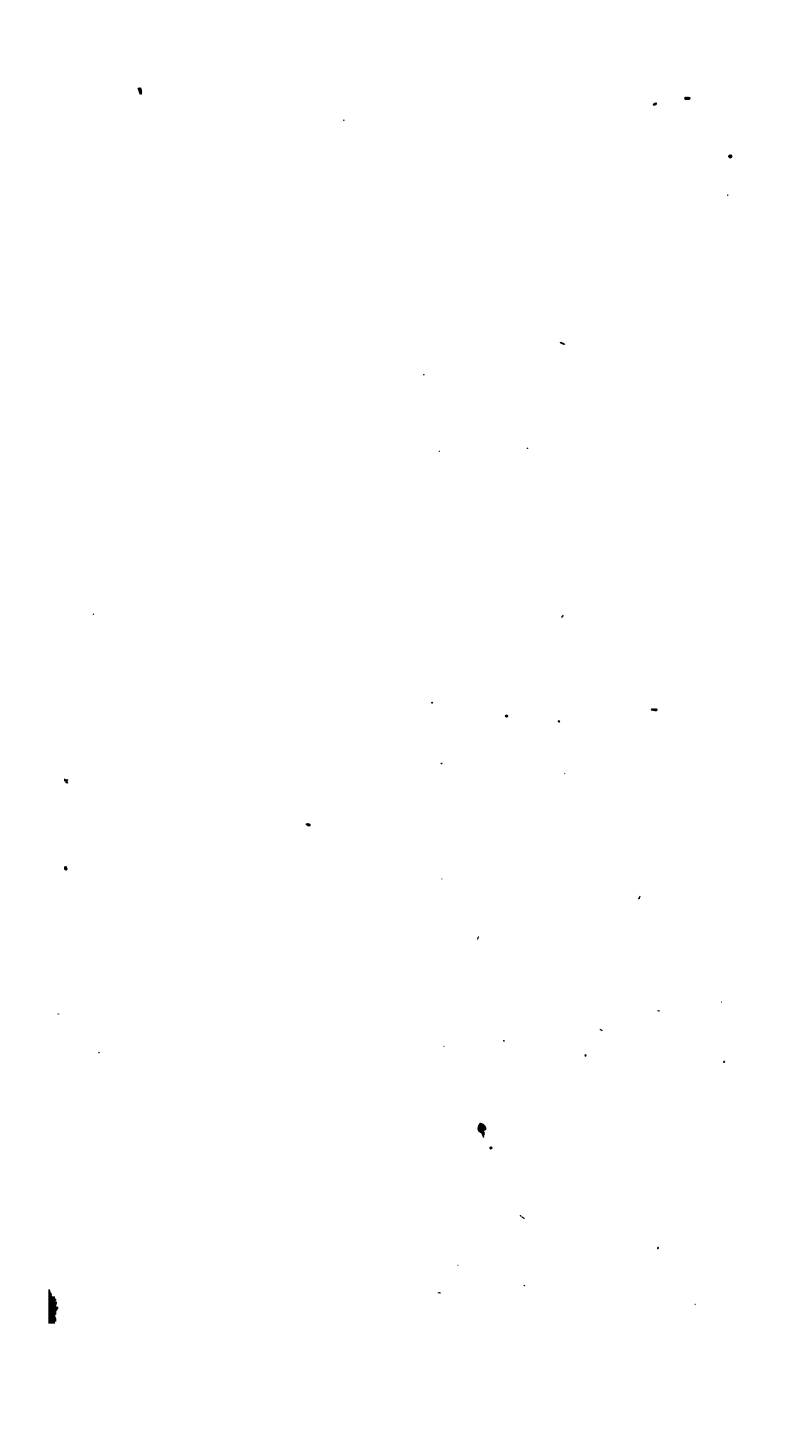
'He remained with us three days. My wife did every thing in her power to make him comfortable; but at the end of that time, he said he must be off again to the woods. He was tired of the village, and of having so many people about him. He accordingly returned to the wilderness, and to hunting life. But I fear he did not make a good end of it; for I understand that a few years before his death, he married Sukey Thomas, who lived at the White Oak Run.'



S A G A

or

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR.



S A G A
OF
THE SKELETON IN ARMOR.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

I.

'SPEAK! speak! thou fearful guest!
Who, with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armor drest,
Comest to daunt me!
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,
But with thy fleshers palms
Stretch'd, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me?'

The Poet questions the Skeleton in Armor at Fall River, and asks why his imagination should be haunted by so fearful an apparition.

II.

Then, from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seem'd to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
From the heart's chamber.

A spectral light gleams in the hollow eyes of the Skeleton, and a low, mournful voice issues from his chest.

III.

'I was a Viking old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
No Saga taught thee!
Take heed, that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Eke dread a dead man's curse!
For this I sought thee.

The Skeleton speaks; he had been a Northern Viking, or Pirate: but no song of the bard nor popular tradition had preserved his heroic deeds from oblivion.

Relates the courage and adventures of his childhood.

IV.
 ' Far in the Northern Land,
 By the wild Baltic's strand,
 I, with my childish hand,
 Tamed the ger-falcon :
 And with my skates fast-bound,
 Skimm'd the half-frozen Sound,
 That the poor whimpering hound
 Trembled to walk on.

More perilous achievements of his youth.

V.
 ' Oft to his frozen lair
 Tracked I the grisly bear,
 While from my path the hare
 Fled like a shadow ;
 Oft through the forest dark
 Follow'd the were-wolf's bark,
 Until the soaring lark
 Sang from the meadow.

Becomes a pirate, and leads a wild life at sea.

VI.
 ' But when I older grew,
 Joining a Corsair's crew,
 O'er the dark sea I flew
 With the marauders.
 Wild was the life we led ;
 Many the souls that sped,
 Many the hearts that bled,
 By our stern orders.

Likewise a wild life on shore in winter, carousing at night, and hearing the tales of some fierce Berserk, a descendant of Arngrim, who fought his foes with a naked breast, as the name Berserk, *Bare-shirt*, sufficiently denotes.

VII.
 ' Many a wassail-bout
 Wore the long winter out ;
 Often our midnight shout
 Set the cocks crowing,
 As we the Berserk's tale
 Measured in cups of ale,
 Draining the oaken pail,
 Fill'd to o'erflowing.

As he tells a story of the sea, the eyes of a maiden gaze at him, and he becomes enamored.

VIII.
 ' Once as I told in glee
 Tales of the stormy sea,
 Soft eyes did gaze on me,
 Burning yet tender ;
 And as the white stars shine
 On the dark Norway pine,
 On that dark heart of mine
 Fell their soft splendor.

He wins the maiden's heart in the forest.

IX.
 ' I woo'd the blue-eyed maid,
 Yielding, yet half afraid,
 And in the forest's shade
 Our vows were plighted.

Under its loosen'd vest
Flutter'd her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frighted.

X.

' Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleam'd upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chaunting his glory ;
When of Old Hildebrand
I ask'd his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

A beer-carouse in the halls of her father Hildebrand. He asks her hand, and the minstrels are mute at his audacity.

XI.

' While the brown ale he quaff'd,
Loud then the champion laugh'd,
And as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn
Out of those lips unshorn
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly.

He is laughed to scorn by old Hildebrand.

XII.

' She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blush'd and smiled,
I was discarded !
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight,
Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded ?

Is discarded by Hildebrand, but steals the maiden away at night.

XIII.

' Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me —
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen ! —
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his arm'd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

Puts to sea ; but is pursued by Hildebrand and his followers.

XIV.

' Then launched they to the blast —
Bent like a reed each mast —
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind fail'd us ;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hail'd us,

He gains upon his pursuers, when a head-wind round the Cape of Skaw drives him back.

Runs down the
vessel of Hildebrand,
and sinks him and
his crew.

Like a bird of prey,
bears off the maiden.

Driven westward
by a fierce storm;
but at length makes
land near Newport,
and builds the round
tower.

Lives many years
in peace. His bride
dies.

In despair, falls
upon his own spear
in the forest, and
dies.

His soul ascends to
the Hall of Odin;
and with the souls of
warriors, drinks a
skol or health to the
Northland. The Saga
ends.

XV.

' And as to catch the gale
Round veer'd the flapping sail,
Death! was the helmsman's hail,
Death without quarter!
Mid-ships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water!

XVI.

' As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey laden,
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again
Through the wild hurricane,
Bore I the maiden.

XVII.

' Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to lea-ward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
Is looking sea-ward.

XVIII.

' There lived we many years;
Time dried the maiden's tears;
She had forgot her fears,
She was a mother;
Death clos'd her mild blue eyes,
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another!

XIX.

' Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen!
Hateful to me were men,
The sun-light hateful!
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
O, death was grateful

XX.

' Thus, seam'd with many scars
Bursting there pri-ou bars,
Up to its native stars
My soul ascended!
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skol! to the Northland! skol!
— Thus the tale ended.

PETER CRAM:

OR THE

ROW AT TINNECUM: A SKETCH OF LONG-ISLAND



PETER C R A M:

OR THE

ROW AT TINNECUM: A SKETCH OF LONG-ISLAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE KUSHOW PROPERTY.'

THE village of Tinnecum, situated on Swan-Creek, Long-Island, has hitherto escaped the observation of travellers; happy, however, in this respect, if she has likewise escaped their ill-natured remarks and maledictions. There is, it is true, little here to attract the eye. A church, a school-house, a shop, a tavern, and a blacksmith's forge, supply the spiritual and temporal wants of those who make up the small society. By some extraordinary oversight, the Postmaster-General has neglected to establish a post-office in this place, so that the inhabitants, who are wonderfully fond of news, can get little except what they manufacture on the spot. Nevertheless I must not forget to mention that a newspaper has just been established, which manages to get wind of the great revolutions which

take place in the world, long after they have ceased to be matters of surprise or wonder. It is a pity that Tinnecum lies off the mail routes. It makes it a very dull place. The rumbling of coach-wheels, and the clear bugle of the post-man, as he brings up gallantly after creeping for miles at a snail's pace, is never heard. There is no gathering together in groups at the post-office, to catch the rumors of the day, but all things exhibit a stagnation and repose, imaged forth by the languid waters of Swan Creek, which rest upon the profound mud. When the November elections come round, there is indeed more excitement; and recently, when the political party who have always had the upper hand in this neighborhood, gained a renowned victory, and succeeded in sending the blacksmith to the legislature, in opposition to the store-keeper, who was 'too much of a gentleman,' they thought that this was rather too large an exploit to rest in silence; and in order that no one might be ignorant of what they had done, from the north to the south, and from the sea-coast to the Rocky Mountains, they got an immense show-bill struck off, and liberally dispensed, which was headed in flaming capitals to this effect: 'TINNECUM ERECT!'

But the waters of Swan Creek were to be agitated yet more violently than they had ever been 'within the memory of the oldest inhabitant.' There was to be, it seems, a puddle in a storm. To speak more plainly, *the* event which had lately taken place in Tinnecum was of that exciting character, and is the subject of such vehement remark, that it really seems worthy of being recorded in her annals; and the attention of the reader is requested for a few moments

to the narrative of one who would not willingly 'extenuate, or set down aught in malice.'

One evening in the middle of November, Mr. Jonas Weatherby, school-master, who taught all the arts and sciences which it was necessary for the inhabitants of Tinnecum to know, came home very much wearied after the labors of the day, and sat himself down before a good fire to read the 'Tinnecum Gazette.' He had been for some time so engaged, and was beginning to doze comfortably over the learned disquisitions of the editor, when he was observed suddenly to wake up and look bright; his eye-balls expanded and became large; he held the paper first near, and then afar off, as if he had got the wrong focus, and did not read aright; then shaking himself in his chair, he began to sniffle in a way indicative of contempt and indignation. The cause of all this feeling was a simple announcement in the Gazette, in the following terms:

'INSTRUCTION IN THE ART OF SINGING.

'MR. PETER CRAM, of the State of New-Hampshire, respectfully informs the inhabitants of Tinnecum, that he intends to open a singing-school in this village, provided sufficient encouragement is given. The course of instruction will be twenty-four lessons, in RHYTHM, MELODY and DYNAMICS. He proposes to meet those who are desirous of instruction in music, at the Big-room of the Tavern, on Tuesday evening, when the first lecture will be delivered GRATIS, at which the public generally are invited to attend.'

'Here is a pretty illustration of bringing coals to Newcastle!' thought Mr. Weatherby, as he reflected on this impudent invasion of his musical province. Here comes a New-Hampshire Yankee, green from the mountains, who cannot pronounce three words

according to Walker, I'll warrant it, and wants to set up a singin'-school in Tinnecum, where I have been chorister for these ten years past, and regularly instructed the folks in psalmody ! Like enough he will come here with his hallelujah choruses, and powerful anthems, and new-fangled notions, and almost craze some foolish heads. But he sha' n't snatch my laurels, nor shall I be trifled with. It shall be Peter Cram, or Jonas Weatherby, one or the other. If this stranger is to receive countenance, then I pull up stakes, and depart from Tinnecum forever.' This solemn resolve was promptly suggested to the mind of the school-master, who manifested not a little contempt and anger ; for the more he read the advertisement, the more he was astonished at the rashest act of temerity he had ever witnessed in his born days. If it were not for the evidence of his eyes, he would not have believed that any one would have ventured along the shores of Swan Creek on such an errand. ONLY TO THINK OF BRINGING MUSIC TO TINNECUM !

After fidgetting about for some time, Mr. Weatherby got his hat and cloak, and crumpling up the obnoxious paper, went out. The cold air of the night did not allay his excitement. He directed his steps to a small apartment situated over the horse-shed of the inn, where a huge board projected in the air, on which was inscribed in large characters, 'OFFICE OF THE TINNECUM GAZETTE.' There was a flight of steps on the outside, which the school-master ascended, and opening a door at the landing, entered without ceremony. The room was dark, silent, and almost solitary. A single mould candle, having a thief in it,

and stuck in a black bottle, which had become thoroughly encrusted with grease, shed an uncertain light over the forms, cases, and cabalistic instruments of art, scarcely revealing the huge iron outlines of the 'press,' which vaguely suggested to the mind the idea of that 'tremendous agent,' which it is described to be. It was the day after publication, when the noise, bustle, and clatter of the office had momentarily ceased, and the cry of 'copy' and continual demands upon the brain were stayed.

The *genius-loci* sat at a table, snuffing the air of literary sanctity, but forgetting to snuff his candle withal. It is no wonder that he was absent-minded, for the departments of his labor were many. He made the news, printed it, pressed it, wrapped it, and despatched it; and he was at this moment engaged in the task of pasting wrappers on papers which were intended for the Long-Island subscribers at Bog Lots, Drowned Meadow, Patch-Hog, and Mount Misery. He was an inferior-looking man, of servile demeanor, with a low, concave brow, and whose other features seemed to retire unanimously to make room for a great beak of a nose, which nature made on purpose to be twitched, and which cast the shadow of a flying bridge over a wide extent of wall. It was wonderful that so distinguished a member disappointed the end for which it appeared to have been formed; for although many persons felt an irrepressible inclination to give it a tweak, the owner was so meek and inoffensive that he never afforded any body a chance: for his editorial reflections could not in any case be construed into libel, unless they were severely wrested; on the contrary, they were so obvious in their cha-

racter, that they could with difficulty be questioned at all. Nevertheless Mr. Weatherby presented himself before the editor, somewhat excited, and holding the crumpled paper in his right hand, which he clenched so tightly that the windows rattled in the room, 'Sir,' said he, 'I hold in my hand the Tinnecum Gazette, of yesterday's date.'

'An interesting number, wa'nt it?' replied the editor, who was far from suspecting any cause of displeasure in the person who addressed him.

'Yes, it was interesting—particularly so,' said Mr. Weatherby, with a sardonic smile, which the darkness of the room concealed. Then raising his voice, so that his feelings could not be mistaken, 'I come here to inquire,' said he, 'whether you are privy to that article;' and he thrust the newspaper in the light, and put his finger upon the name of PETER CRAM.

'I printed it,' replied the editor, in a tone of perplexity and surprise.

'You printed it!' thundered the school-master; 'then let me tell you that you have done insult and injury to me, by alluding to this man in your editorial columns. He is an impostor and an ignorant ramus, and such he will turn out to be, and you had n't ought to have recommended him. By so doing, you bring contempt on the legitimate masters of the art. You see that, don't you?'

'Jes' so!' conceded the obsequious editor; but he murmured something about the 'liberty of the press.'

'The 'liberty of the press!'' echoed Mr. Weatherby, in a loud and contemptuous tone, which would have required all the exclamation points in the office *to express its emphasis*; 'if the 'liberty of the press'

consists in praising quacks and impostors, then I for one do not know what it means. I should rather call it a prostitution of the press. That's equally plain, is n't it?

'Jes' so!' said the editor, cowering: 'I hope you will excuse me; I did n't mean any harm.'

Notwithstanding the wrath of the school-master was thus deprecated, he continued to speak for a long time in the printing-office with caustic severity, and at last he took the paper in question, and wended his way homeward, stopping however first at the blacksmith's shop. Here he gained the attention of a little audience, and for several minutes the bellows ceased to heave, the iron cooled on the anvil, the sparks went up lazily out of the chimney, one after another, instead of ascending in blazing fire-works, and the interesting operation of making hob-nails was arrested. Mr. Weatherby then went into the 'store,' where half the town of Tinnecum were warming their fingers around the stove-pipe, and wound up his argument against itinerating school-masters, in these emphatic words, which will long be remembered by those who heard them:

'Gentlemen, it is rascally, it is contemptible!'

The consequence of all this was, that quite a party was got up against Peter Cram, and a council convened to determine what it was proper to do to him. Some were in favor of keeping entirely aloof, and looking upon him with silent contempt; others wished to appoint a committee to wait on him and inform him that his services were not needed; while the younger part of the community would resort to the lawless alternative of plunging him head and ears

into Swan Creek. Fortunately for Mr. Cram, a grand obstacle prevented them from executing any of these plans. They had an itching and craving desire of novelty, and secretly they had no intention of crushing this matter in the bud, just to gratify Mr. Weatherby. For since the departure of the 'Erudite Goat,' and the 'Albino Lady,' and the 'Prodigious Children,' there had been no exhibition of any kind at Tinnecum. Consequently they determined to wait the arrival of the stranger, and let him speak for himself.

Probably if no previous mention had been made of him, he would have attracted little attention, and would have quietly departed for the want of patronage; but now the whole village were on the *qui vive*, and when the appointed evening came, the place of meeting was crowded almost to suffocation. It was the Big-room of the tavern, where the town-meetings were usually held, and where there was a dance every winter after the first snow, provided the services of the blind fiddler could be secured. It was illuminated on the present occasion by five candles, four of which were placed in tin receptacles on the walls, and one stood on the table. An ominous silence reigned in the assembly, something like that which precedes a thunder-storm, when the air is pent and murky, and scarcely a leaf is seen to move. Mr. Cram had not yet arrived, but he was momentarily expected, and there was a stretching of necks at every motion in the direction of the door. At the last moment, when expectation was wrought to the highest pitch, he entered, and walking up to the table, laid down an oblong book, called 'Zion's Harp, or the Collections of the New-Hampshire Academy.'

His motions were watched with great greediness. He commenced operations by pulling off his great-coat and hanging it upon a peg, at the same time rubbing his hands, and adjusting his dress. This he did with a smart, sprightly air, for the number collected had flushed his cadaverous cheeks with the hope of unwonted success.

He was a tall, shambling man, and his body, if I may speak musically, was composed of flats and sharps. His feet were flat, his stomach, chest, back, all were as flat as grave-stones ; but his chin was sharp, and his nose 'looked as if it had been cut out of a shingle,' and lay in the same plane or superficies with his cheeks, of which it was a continuation. His mental endowments, to speak the truth, were not any richer. He was utterly ignorant of the world, and simple and unsuspecting in his character. He looked for no guile in others, and for his own part, there is no doubt that he had at heart his individual emolument, and the improvement of the 'Tinnecum folks in psalmody. He had received his musical education at the base of the Green Mountains, and his dialect was rancorously tinctured with the peculiarities of that region. He began the lecture, by saying that there were more persons present than he cal'lated to have met on the first night, and that it was gratifying to see them so eager to embrace this privilege, for it *was* 'a great and creöwning privilege,' to possess the means of instruction in this sublime art. He said that music was of divine origin ; that it was coëval with the world, and that the morning stars sang together for joy ; that it was common among the primitive Christians ; and that it was said of the disciples

in the Testament, that they 'sang a hymn, and went aöout !'

No sooner was this last word heard—which was uttered with a compound twang which it is impossible to describe, out of the mouth of Mr. Peter Cram—than the down-east pronunciation struck upon the Dorian ears of the Tinnecumites, and they burst into a fit of inextinguishable laughter. This first symptom of insubordination was however utterly unintelligible to the lecturer, and he went on. He remarked that music had been used *in the army*, at an early date, and that the children of Israel were commanded to try the musical properties of *reäms'-horns*, when they besieged the town of Jericho, and by those means the walls fell down. After that, the use of 'reäms'-horns' was continued in the army for a long time, to allay excitement and to soothe the feelings. It had been fitly said, that

'Music was formed to tame the savage breast,
And lull the angry passions all to rest.'

After many more reflections of this nature, and some grotesque illustrations, to render them more forcible, Mr. Peter Cram arrived at the driest part of the lecture. He said that the science of music might properly be divided into three parts, viz: rhythm, melody, and dynamics. He asked their attention while he attempted to explain briefly what they were.

He was proceeding to give the definitions with mathematical precision, when a movement was observed in the middle of the room, and the spectators held in their breath with excitement when they be-

held Mr. Weatherby slowly rising to his feet, and evidently about to speak. That profound teacher had listened from the beginning with exemplary patience, but things had now arrived at that pitch of absurdity, that he deemed it his duty to interpose for his townsman's sake. 'Sir,' said he, gazing at Cram so steadily and so sternly, that folks said, after the meeting was out, that they wondered that the look did n't cut him in two: 'I beg leave to suggest to you that the Tinnecum people don't care much about the *elements* of music, of which they have hear'n tell for these two hundred years, and more; and it is the opinion of those present, that you had better skip over that part of the subject, and give us a sample of your style of singing, and we will try and jine in with you.'

'Ah,' replied Cram, with a patronizing smile, as if he were allaying impatience, and holding back a store of good things which he was not yet ready to dispense, 'we mus' n't be impatient; we must feel our way as we go. You will find these things sort o' dry, Sir, at first, but it won't be long before you get to love 'em. It won't do to leave off square jest here.'

'We insist upon it!' said Mr. Weatherby; and this motion was seconded by an uproarious demonstration on the part of the audience.

'Oh, very well! replied Cram; 'it doosn't matter a pin's p'int to me; I cal'lated to lectur', and I'd jest as leave do it as let it alone. But I've no objection to sing you a psalm-tune, since you're anxious to hear it; but after that you must buckle to, and stick to the *elements*. Spellin' comes before readin',

and readin' before writin'. Has any on ye got a tunin'-fork ?

'A what !' shouted the inhabitants of Tinnecum, with eager curiosity.

'A tunin'-fork, my friends. I left mine to home, to New-Hampshire. It slipped out of my pocket while I was a-splittin' rails.'

'I say there,' shouted a voice in one corner of the room, 'landlord's got one o' them 'ere things.'

'Will somebody be so kind as to go and ask landlord to lend it for the use of the singin'-school? Take good keer of it.'

A messenger being despatched, Mr. Cram said that in the mean time he would give them a little exercise for the voice ; he therefore requested them to repeat after him the syllable, la ! 'Them gentlemen,' said he, 'that's a-settin' on the bedstead, in the corner of the room, please not make so much squeaking. Them boys that's a scrouging each other, will find plenty of room this way. Silence, gentlemen, if you please. Pay attention and take notice of me. La, la—la—la—la—la ! Now all jine in.' 'La—la—la, la—la—la !' 'Good !' said Cram ; 'that's enough.' But the inhabitants of Tinnecum proceeded to exclaim 'La—la—la—la—la !' 'I tell ye that's enough !' said he. But they thought otherwise, and continued to drown his voice with the monotonous cry of 'La, la—la—la—la !' Mr. Cram stamped his foot, and strove to command attention ; but he might as easily have silenced a sheep-fold ; and when he reflected that wherever there was singin'-schools, there *would* be carryings-on, 'he thought the cheapest plan was *to let them have the fun out*. When the noise had

subsided, he told them that he *thought* they would 'get to love the science before long, but they were rather more on the go-ahead plan than the New-Hampshire folks.' This raised a prodigious laugh, which put him in a pleasant mood. 'Ain't there no *gals* in this neighborhood?' said he; 'I never see a school organized without *them*.'

'Oh! lots on 'em!' replied the scholars.

'Then jest fork 'em over here!' said he; but no sooner were the words out of his mouth, than a suppressed giggling was heard in the direction of the door, and the landlord's buxom daughters, who had been peeping upon the scene, precipitately fled. This again raised a good deal of laughter and confusion, during which, that no time might be lost, Mr. Cram took out of his pocket a wooden comb, 'in two parts,' made at the New-Hampshire Wooden-Bowl and Fancy Snuff-box Manufactory,' and began to 'slick down' his hair. This nice little operation over, he fumbled for a bit of chalk, and said he was going to give them a little idea of *time*. He then strode up to the black-board which consisted of a plate of sheet-iron well rusted, which he said 'would have to do,' as Mr. Weatherby didn't feel justified in letting his go out of the school-house, and wrote some musical characters.

'What's them things?' cried an ignoramus in the crowd.

'Them is *minims*,' replied he, obligingly.

'We don't want minims, we want Old Hundred!' exclaimed several.

'Don't be so heady,' replied Cram; 'you can't do two actions to-once.'

'Old Hundred !' exclaimed the assembly, with one consent.

'Gentlemen, time is very important ; I was going to give you some exercises in beating time ; Old Hundred bime-by.'

'Ay, ay, let's beat time !' said a number.

'That looks like coming to reason,' replied he ; now pay strict attention, and I'll show you how it's to be done. I want you should all raise up your right hands, jest as I do.'

All obeyed the summons as far as related to lifting up the hands, only some held up the right, some the left, and others both ; and the patched elbows which appeared, reflected abundant credit on the housewives of Tinnecum.

'Now,' said he, 'I want you should bring down your hand horizontally, and then carry it up ag'in, and say, 'Downward beat, upward beat ; downward beat, upward beat ; downward beat, upward beat.'

The scholars of Tinnecum obeyed this direction with enthusiastic promptitude, stamping with their feet, and jarring the tavern to its foundation, while they shouted lustily, and with tolerable precision, 'Downward beat, upward beat ; downward beat, upward beat ; downward beat, upward beat.'

Cram's eye sparkled. He looked round the room with a gratified air. The school was getting into capital order ; it was evident they were becoming 'interested,' and he reflected to himself, that 'only leave him alone,' and he would cheat 'em into the elements, before he sang Old Hundred for them. He never 'see' such scholars, except when he taught school one winter in the 'walley' of Connecticut.

‘Now,’ said he, ‘we’ll have triple time. Make three motions, thus: ‘Downward beat—hither beat—upward beat.’

The scholars obeyed willingly, repeating the words, ‘Downward beat—hither beat—upward beat; downward beat—hither beat—upward beat.’ And this they did for several minutes, and stopped beating when requested.

Cram was delighted; but not to push the scholars on too fast, lest they should become wearied, and relapse into inattention, he entertained them by making a few remarks with respect to the indispensable necessity of keeping correct time. ‘Ever sence I took to school-teachin,’ said he, ‘for which I left a very profitable profession, (the manufacturing of pump-handles,) I set a proper valy on time. There’s nothing more important in singing; and I hope my pupils here begins to see it. Is the gentleman that spoke a spell ago satisfied on that p’int?’ said he, glancing in the direction of Mr. Weatherby.

‘Oh yes,’ replied the latter, humoring the joke, ‘perfectly satisfied!’

‘Thank’ee, Sir,’ said Cram; ‘I’m pleased to hear you say so; and now as we’re getting on so slick, ’spose an’ we try a lick at the quadruple time? Attention by the bedstead there. Lift up your right hands, gentlemen—are you ready? Downward beat—hither beat—thither beat—upward beat; downward beat—hither beat—thither beat—upward beat.’

This pleasant exercise was interrupted by the arrival of the messenger who had gone after a tuning-fork, and who now presented to the breast of Mr. Cram the sharp points of a two-pronged table fork,

with an air which seemed to indicate that he had executed his commission to the letter. 'Well, really,' thought the professor, as he gazed at the instrument with evident surprise, 'to think that the Long-Island folks never see a tunin'-fork!' He however grinned pleasantly, and endeavored to smooth over the matter, saying that his meaning had been entirely mistaken, and kindly entering into an explanation of the thing required. 'My friends,' said he, 'a tunin'-fork is not what you suppose it to be, an article to use at the table, and to pick teeth with, but it's something that you get the pitch with.'

'Ah,' is it *indeed*?' said Mr. Weatherby, speaking from the middle of the room.

'Yes, my friend,' replied Cram; 'I would show you mine with pleasure, but I lost it, when I was to home. I would n't have parted with it for a load of shingles.'

Here a considerable confusion took place in different parts of the room, and there was a loud demand for 'Old Hundred.' 'Ay, ay,' said he, shaking his head understandingly; 'I have n't forgot that yet. I s'pose some of the youngsters would like to have me sing a psalm tune by this time, and some of the old folks too, may be. 'Bubby,' added he, looking at a white-headed little boy, with that affectionate good humor which indicates the love of children, 'blow your nose first, and then go and tell landlord to send me a tum'ler of water; I'm pretty nigh chok'd. Make haste, and mind, bubby, tell him to put a little apple-brandy into it.'

Cram now began to cough, and clear his throat, *preparatory* to singing Old Hundred. Standing with

his arms a-kimbo, and his feet in the first position, he bent his body slightly forward, and screwing up one eye, while he gazed eagerly downward with the other, spat with unerring aim through a small knot-hole in the floor ; then throwing his head back, and scraping with his right foot the edges of the orifice with an air which seemed to indicate that he had accomplished nothing remarkable, and which he could n't do again if it were necessary. 'We'll try, and *guess* at the pitch,' said he ; 'fa, sol, la, fa—sol, la, mi, fa. Fa, mi, la, sol, fa !' Humming over these syllables rapidly, he requested those who thought they could come 'any wheres nigh the tune, to jine in' with him. Then opening the Collection of the New-Hampshire Academy, he lifted up his right hand for the purpose of beating time, and began to give a specimen of his powers in good earnest. His voice was really not a bad one, and it was now wonderfully clarified by the apple-brandy. Unhappily, the whole audience undertook to 'jine in,' and every man setting out upon a different key, produced such wild and warring sounds as it is difficult to imagine. When they had finished the first verse, Cram shook his head, but not upbraidingly, for it was not his intention to discourage them.

'It doosn't sound much like it,' said he, 'but I never calculate to look for too much from new beginners. Try it again.'

The second attempt, however, resulted much worse than the first ; and some of the profane so far forgot themselves, as to intermingle all manner of hideous sounds, and even to sing the air of that popular song called 'Jim along Josey.'

‘That will do,’ said Cram, decidedly; ‘there is room for improvement. I’m glad I come to this place; and I feel as if I was sent here by a particular Providence. My friends, singin’ is a science which comes pretty tough at first, but it goes slick afterwards; and if you pay the attention that you had ought to, in three months I’ll make you know pretty nigh as much as I know myself.’

While this harangue was going on, a certain wight of Tinnecum who had ‘an eye,’ got behind Mr. Cram, and chalked his full-length portrait on the black-board; and as the plot of this little farce was rapidly approaching its *denouement*, no sooner was this perceived, than a burst of undisguised laughter proceeded from the crowd. ‘Ha!’ said Cram, turning around, ‘a very pretty picter! Music and drawing is twin sciences.’ Another laugh, and cheers hearty and thrice repeated, followed this oracular saying. Cram smiled. He certainly did not know why the audience should laugh at every thing he said, but he supposed as business had been transacted first, that play must come afterward.

But a solemn pause now succeeded, unbroken for several seconds by a single word or motion; and Mr. Cram was on the point of requesting those persons who ‘calculated to jine the singin’-school,’ to come forward to the table and ‘subscribe their names,’ when Squire Sharkey, a man universally known and respected in the town of Tinnecum, left his seat, went up to Cram, and leisurely casting his eye about the room, called out in a clear, distinct voice:

‘Will Mr. Weatherby please to walk this way?’

A breathless anticipation pervaded the audience, as

that gentleman slowly arose, cast aside his cloak, and approached, as he was desired.

'Mr. Cram,' said the Squire, looking him full in the face, and speaking loudly, so that every one might hear :

'Permit me to introduce to your particular acquaintance, Mr. JONAS WEATHERBY, Instructor of District School Number Three, and Chorister of the Presbyterian Meeting-house in this town!'

This tremendous announcement was followed by great excitement, whispering, and suppressed exclamations, all through the assembly, who seemed to think that Mr. Cram ought certainly to sink through the earth. That personage *did* look particularly foolish. A sickly smile came over him, and his head rolled from side to side, as if it desired a hiding-place. But he was too ingenious to suffer himself to become the victim of a predicament. In a little while he recovered his self-possession, or, to make use of his own expressions, 'he slicked up.' He scratched his head in deep study, and at last starting as if with some bright idea, and gazing eagerly at the Tinnecum schoolmaster, 'Look a-here,' said he, 's'pose an' we take the school on *sheers* ?'

He made the suggestion so much on the impulse of the moment, that he was almost frightened when he had said it; and he paused immediately, to observe what the effect would be. Mr. Weatherby nodded his head and smiled; then he looked at Squire Sharkey, and *he* smiled. Cram mistook the expression of that profound contempt, and proposed that they should sing a duet. Before this offer could be met, one of the candles was suddenly extinguished,

in an instant after another, then a third, and (it grieves me to record so gross an instance of misconduct,) in the midst of the greatest tumult and confusion, a fourth was hurled at Mr. Cram by some unknown hand, and hit him on the bridge of the nose. Bewildered, and scarcely knowing what he did, he grasped the remaining candle upon the table convulsively, and when that shared the fate of the others, being pushed and pulled about in the dark, he roared loudly for quarter.

But the better class of the inhabitants of Tinnecum did not permit this scene to continue. They struck a light, and took Mr. Cram under their protection. He shook from head to foot like an aspen leaf, nor could he divest himself of the idea that he was mobbed, and in imminent danger of being murdered. He came within an ace, however, of turning the tables upon his oppressors. It seems that he had all his life been subject to 'spasms,' as he himself called them; in other words, to epileptic attacks, of a strong character. But as these came on at regular intervals, generally at the change of the moon, he so timed his operations that they should never clash with singing-meetings. But now, whether owing to miscalculation, or to the agitation of his brain, or from what cause it is difficult to say, without giving any previous notice, he sprang from his feet with a yell absolutely terrific, and the moment that he touched the ground, began to whirl round like a dancing dervish, and throwing out his long arms, to dash down every thing within his reach. Benches, table, black-board, were strewn around in confusion, and a valuable *Slickville clock*, which stood on the mantel, was for

several minutes in imminent jeopardy. Those who were in the room went out of the doors and windows precipitately, as if they had fled from the cage of a wild beast. It was some time before they dared to return; and then, as they peeped in at the door to look at the state of things, they could not help upbraiding themselves. 'He's been druv' into fits!' said one; 'he's been treated shameful!' 'Fits is awful,' replied they; 'but Peter Cram's fits goes ahead of any thing we ever seen!'

When the distraction of the unfortunate man had ceased, he was put to bed and kindly treated. The next morning he had recovered from his fright, and felt better, and even went so far as to say that he 'had known worse noises at some singin'-concerts afore now.' But he decided that it was best for him to depart from Tinnecum. Before the sun had risen very high, he left the place where he had received such ill treatment, and putting a little brown trunk under his left arm, strode down with hasty steps to the shores of Swan Creek. There he made a keen bargain with the owner of a skiff, and in a few moments embarked, and pushed off with a long pole. He was observed for several hours urging himself along, until at last his tall form entirely disappeared in the distance; and as he was never seen or heard of afterward, it is supposed that he was lost amidst the windings and meanderings of that romantic river.

GUESTS FROM GIBBET-ISLAND.



GUESTS FROM GIBBET-ISLAND.

A LEGEND OF COMMUNIPAW.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

WHOEVER has visited the ancient and renowned village of Communipaw, may have noticed an old stone building, of most ruinous and sinister appearance. The doors and window-shutters are ready to drop from their hinges; old clothes are stuffed in the broken panes of glass, while legions of half-starved dogs prowl about the premises, and rush out and bark at every passer by; for your beggarly house in a village is most apt to swarm with profligate and ill-conditioned dogs. What adds to the sinister appearance of this mansion, is a tall frame in front, not a little resembling a gallows, and which looks as if waiting to accommodate some of the inhabitants with a well merited airing. It is not a gallows, however, but an ancient sign-post; for this dwelling, in the golden days of Communipaw, was one of the most orderly and peaceful of village taverns, where all the public affairs of Communipaw were talked and smoked over. In fact, it was in this very building

that Oloffte the Dreamer, and his companions, concerted that great voyage of discovery and colonization, in which they explored Buttermilk Channel, were nearly shipwrecked in the strait of Hellgate, and finally landed on the island of Manhattan, and founded the great city of New-Amsterdam.

Even after the province had been cruelly wrested from the sway of their High Mightinesses, by the combined forces of the British and the Yankees, this tavern continued its ancient loyalty. It is true, the head of the Prince of Orange disappeared from the sign; a strange bird being painted over it, with the explanatory legend of 'DIE WILDE GANS,' or The Wild Goose; but this all the world knew to be a sly riddle of the landlord, the worthy Teunis Van Gieson, a knowing man in a small way, who laid his finger beside his nose and winked, when any one studied the signification of his sign, and observed that his goose was hatching, but would join the flock whenever they flew over the water; an enigma which was the perpetual recreation and delight of the loyal but fat-headed burghers of Communipaw.

Under the sway of this patriotic, though discreet and quiet publican, the tavern continued to flourish in primeval tranquillity, and was the resort of all true-hearted Nederlanders, from all parts of Pavonia; who met here quietly and secretly, to smoke and drink the downfall of Briton and Yankee, and success to Admiral Van Tromp.

The only drawback on the comfort of the establishment, was a nephew of mine host, a sister's son, Yan Yost Vanderscamp by name, and a real scamp by nature. This unlucky whipster showed an early

propensity to mischief, which he gratified in a small way, by playing tricks upon the frequenters of the Wild Goose ; putting gunpowder in their pipes, or squibs in their pockets, and astonishig them with an explosion, while they sat nodding round the fire-place in the bar-room ; and if perchance a worthy burgher from some distant part of Pavonia had lingered until dark over his potation, it was odds but that young Vanderscamp would slip a briar under his horse's tail, as he mounted, and send him clattering along the road, in neck-or-nothing style, to his infinite astonishment and discomfiture.

It may be wondered at, that mine host of the Wild Goose did not turn such a graceless varlet out of doors ; but Teunis Van Gieson was an easy-tempered man, and, having no child of his own, looked upon his nephew with almost parental indulgence. His patience and good nature were doomed to be tried by another inmate of his mansion. This was a cross-grained curmudgeon of a negro, named Pluto, who was a kind of enigma in Communipaw. Where he came from, nobody knew. He was found one morning, after a storm, cast like a sea-monster on the strand, in front of the Wild Goose, and lay there, more dead than alive. The neighbors gathered round, and speculated on this production of the deep ; whether it were fish or flesh, or a compound of both, commonly yclept a merman. The kind-hearted Teunis Van Gieson, seeing that he wore the human form, took him into his house, and warmed him into life. By degrees, he showed signs of intelligence, and even uttered sounds very much like language, but which no one in Communipaw could understand.

Some thought him a negro just from Guinea, who had either fallen overboard, or escaped from a slave-ship. Nothing, however, could ever draw from him any account of his origin. When questioned on the subject, he merely pointed to Gibbet-Island, a small rocky islet, which lies in the open bay, just opposite to Communipaw, as if that were his native place, though every body knew it had never been inhabited.

In the process of time, he acquired something of the Dutch language, that is to say, he learnt all its vocabulary of oaths and maledictions, with just words sufficient to string them together. 'Donder en blicksem!' (thunder and lightning,) was the gentlest of his ejaculations. For years he kept about the Wild Goose, more like one of those familiar spirits, or household goblins, that we read of, than like a human being. He acknowledged allegiance to no one, but performed various domestic offices, when it suited his humor; waiting occasionally on the guests; grooming the horses, cutting wood, drawing water; and all this without being ordered. Lay any command on him, and the stubborn sea-urchin was sure to rebel. He was never so much at home, however, as when on the water, playing about in skiff or canoe, entirely alone, fishing, crabbing, or grabbing for oysters, and would bring home quantities for the larder of the Wild Goose, which he would throw down at the kitchen door, with a growl. No wind nor weather deterred him from launching forth on his favorite element: indeed, the wilder the weather, the more he seemed to enjoy it. If a storm was brewing, he was sure to put off from shore; and would be seen far out in the bay, his light skiff dancing like a

feather on the waves, when sea and sky were all in a turmoil, and the stoutest ships were fain to lower their sails. Sometimes, on such occasions, he would be absent for days together. How he weathered the tempests, and how and where he subsisted, no one could divine, nor did any one venture to ask, for all had an almost superstitious awe of him. Some of the Communipaw oystermen declared that they had more than once seen him suddenly disappear, canoe and all, as if they plunged beneath the waves, and after a while come up again, in quite a different part of the bay; whence they concluded that he could live under water like that notable species of wild duck, commonly called the Hell-diver. All began to consider him in the light of a foul-weather bird, like the Mother Carey's Chicken, or Stormy Petrel; and whenever they saw him putting far out in his skiff, in cloudy weather, made up their minds for a storm.

The only being for whom he seemed to have any liking, was Yan Yost Vanderscamp, and him he liked for his very wickedness. He in a manner took the boy under his tutelage, prompted him to all kinds of mischief, aided him in every wild harum-scarum freak, until the lad became the complete scape-grace of the village; a pest to his uncle, and to every one else. Nor were his pranks confined to the land; he soon learned to accompany old Plutor on the water. Together these worthies would cruise about the broad bay, and all the neighboring straits and rivers; poking around in skiffs and canoes; robbing the set nets of the fishermen; landing on remote coasts, and laying waste orchards and water-melon patches; in short, carrying on a complete system of piracy, on a

small scale. Piloted by Pluto, the youthful Vander-scamp soon became acquainted with all the bays, rivers, creeks, and inlets of the watery world around him; could navigate from the Hook to Spiting-devil on the darkest night, and learned to set even the terrors of Hell-gate at defiance.

At length, negro and boy suddenly disappeared, and days and weeks elapsed, but without tidings of them. Some said they must have run away and gone to sea; others jocosely hinted, that old Pluto, being no other than his namesake in disguise, had spirited away the boy to the nether regions. All, however, agreed in one thing, that the village was well rid of them.

In the process of time, the good Teunis Van Gieson slept with his fathers, and the tavern remained shut up, waiting for a claimant, for the next heir was Yan Yost Vanderscamp, and he had not been heard of for years. At length, one day, a boat was seen pulling for shore, from a long, black, rakish-looking schooner, that lay at anchor in the bay. The boat's crew seemed worthy of the craft from which they debarked. Never had such a set of noisy, roistering, swaggering varlets landed in peaceful Communipaw. They were outlandish in garb and demeanor, and were headed by a rough, burly, bully ruffian, with fiery whiskers, a copper nose, a scar across his face, and a great Flaunderish beaver slouched on one side of his head, in whom, to their dismay, the quiet inhabitants were made to recognise their early pest, Yan Yost Vanderscamp. The rear of this hopeful gang was brought up by old Pluto, who had lost an eye, grown grizzly-headed, and looked more like a devil than ever. Vanderscamp renewed his acquaint-

ance with the old burghers, much against their will, and in a manner not at all to their taste. He slapped them familiarly on the back, gave them an iron grip of the hand, and was hail fellow well met. According to his own account, he had been all the world over ; had made money by bags full ; had ships in every sea, and now meant to turn the Wild Goose into a country seat, where he and his comrades, all rich merchants from foreign parts, might enjoy themselves in the interval of their voyages.

Sure enough, in a little while there was a complete metamorphose of the Wild Goose. From being a quiet, peaceful Dutch public house, it became a most riotous, uproarious private dwelling ; a complete rendezvous for boisterous men of the seas, who came here to have what they called a 'blow out' on dry land, and might be seen at all hours, lounging about the door, or lolling out of the windows ; swearing among themselves, and cracking rough jokes, on every passer by. The house was fitted up, too, in so strange a manner : hammocks slung to the walls, instead of bedsteads ; odd kinds of furniture, of foreign fashion ; bamboo couches, Spanish chairs ; pistols, cutlasses, and blunderbusses, suspended on every peg ; silver crucifixes on the mantle-pieces, silver candle-sticks and porringers on the tables, contrasting oddly with the pewter and Delf ware of the original establishment. And then the strange amusements of these sea-monsters ! Pitching Spanish dollars, instead of quoits ; firing blunderbusses out of the window ; shooting at a mark, or at any unhappy dog, or cat, or pig, or barn-door fowl, that might happen to come within reach.

The only being who seemed to relish their rough waggery, was old Pluto ; and yet he led but a dog's life of it ; for they practised all kinds of manual jokes upon him ; kicked him about like a foot-ball ; shook him by his grizzly mop of wool, and never spoke to him without coupling a curse by way of adjective to his name, and consigning him to the infernal regions. The old fellow, however, seemed to like them the better, the more they cursed him, though his utmost expression of pleasure never amounted to more than the growl of a petted bear, when his ears are rubbed.

Old Pluto, was the ministering spirit at the orgies of the Wild Goose ; and such orgies as took place there ! Such drinking, singing, whooping, swearing ; with an occasional interlude of quarreling and fighting. The noisier grew the revel, the more old Pluto plied the potations, until the guest would become frantic in their merriment, smashing every thing to pieces, and throwing the house out of the windows. Sometimes, after a drinking bout, they sallied forth and scoured the village, to the dismay of the worthy burghers, who gathered their women within doors, and would have shut up the house. Vanderscamp, however, was not to be rebuffed. He insisted on renewing acquaintance with his old neighbors, and on introducing his friends, the merchants, to their families ; swore he was on the look out for a wife, and meant, before he stopped, to find husbands for all their daughters. So, will-ye, nill-ye, sociable he was ; swaggered about their best parlors, with his hat on one side of his head ; sat on the good wife's nicely-waxed mahogany table, kicking his heels against the carved and polished legs ; kissed and tousled the

young vrouws ; and, if they frowned and pouted, gave them a gold rosary, or a sparkling cross, to put them in good humor again.

Sometimes nothing would satisfy him, but he must have some of his old neighbors to dinner at the Wild Goose. There was no refusing him, for he had got the complete upper hand of the community, and the peaceful burghers all stood in awe of him. But what a time would the quiet and worthy men have, among these rake-hells, who would delight to astound them with the most extravagant gunpowder tales, embroidered with all kinds of foreign oaths ; clink the can with them ; pledge them in deep potations ; bawl drinking songs in their ears ; and occasionally fire pistols over their heads, or under the table, and then laugh in their faces, and ask them how they liked the smell of gunpowder.

Thus was the little village of Communipaw for a time like the unfortunate wight possessed with devils ; until Vanderscamp and his brother merchants would sail on another trading voyage, when the Wild Goose would be shut up, and every thing relapse into quiet, only to be disturbed by his next visitation.

The mystery of all these proceedings gradually dawned upon the tardy intellects of Communipaw. These were the times of the notorious Captain Kidd, when the American harbors were the resorts of piratical adventurers of all kinds, who, under pretext of mercantile voyages, scoured the West Indies, made plundering descents upon the Spanish Main, visited even the remote Indian Seas, and then came to dispose of their booty, have their revels, and fit out new expeditions, in the English colonies.

Vanderscamp had served in this hopeful school, and having risen to importance among the bucaniers, had pitched upon his native village and early home, as a quiet, out-of-the-way, unsuspected place, where he and his comrades, while anchored at New-York, might have their feasts, and concert their plans, without molestation.

At length the attention of the British government was called to these piratical enterprises, that were becoming so frequent and outrageous. Vigorous measures were taken to check and punish them. Several of the most noted freebooters were caught and executed, and three of Vanderscamp's chosen comrades, the most riotous swashbucklers of the Wild Goose, were hanged in chains on Gibbet-Island, in full sight of their favorite resort. As to Vanderscamp himself, he and his man Pluto again disappeared, and it was hoped by the people of Communipaw that he had fallen in some foreign brawl, or been swung on some foreign gallows.

For a time, therefore, the tranquillity of the village was restored; the worthy Dutchmen once more smoked their pipes in peace, eyeing, with peculiar complacency, their old pests and terrors, the pirates, dangling and drying in the sun, on Gibbet-Island.

This perfect calm was doomed at length to be ruffled. The fiery persecution of the pirates gradually subsided. Justice was satisfied with the examples that had been made, and there was no more talk of Kidd, and the other heroes of like kidney. On a calm summer evening, a boat, somewhat heavily laden, was seen pulling into Communipaw. What *was the surprise and disquiet of the inhabitants, to*

see Yan Yost Vanderscamp seated at the helm, and his man Pluto tugging at the oar! Vanderscamp, however, was apparently an altered man. He brought home with him a wife, who seemed to be a shrew, and to have the upper hand of him. He no longer was the swaggering, bully ruffian, but affected the regular merchant, and talked of retiring from business, and settling down quietly, to pass the rest of his days in his native place.

The Wild Goose mansion was again opened, but with diminished splendor and no riot. It is true, Vanderscamp had frequent nautical visitors, and the sound of revelry was occasionally overheard in his house; but every thing seemed to be done under the rose; and old Pluto was the only servant that officiated at these orgies. The visitors, indeed, were by no means of the turbulent stamp of their predecessors; but quiet, mysterious traders, full of nods, and winks, and hieroglyphic signs, with whom, to use their cant phrase, 'every thing was smug.' Their ships came to anchor at night, in the lower bay; and, on a private signal, Vanderscamp would launch his boat, and accompanied solely by his man Pluto, would make them mysterious visits. Sometimes boats pulled in at night, in front of the Wild Goose, and various articles of merchandise were landed in the dark, and spirited away, nobody knew whither. One of the more curious of the inhabitants kept watch, and caught a glimpse of the features of some of these night visitors, by the casual glance of a lantern, and declared that he recognized more than one of the freebooting frequenters of the Wild Goose, in former times; from whence he concluded that Vanderscamp

‘No indeed ! they have got here before you, but by your invitation ; and blessed looking company they are, truly !’

Vanderscamp’s knees smote together. ‘For the love of heaven, where are they, wife ?’

‘Where ?—why in the blue room, up stairs making themselves as much at home as if the house were their own.’

Vanderscamp made a desperate effort, scrambled up to the room, and threw open the door. Sure enough, there at a table, on which burned a light as blue as brimstone, sat the three guests from Gibbet Island, with halters round their necks, and bobbing their cups together, as if they were hob-or-nobbing, and trolling the old Dutch freebooter’s glee, since translated into English :

‘For three merry lads be we,
And three merry lads be we ;
I on the land, and thou on the sand,
And Jack on the gallows-tree.’

Vanderscamp saw and heard no more. Starting back with horror, he missed his footing on the landing place, and fell from the top of the stairs to the bottom. He was taken up speechless, and, either from the fall or the fright, was buried in the yard of the little Dutch church at Bergen, on the following Sunday.

From that day forward, the fate of the Wild Goose was sealed. It was pronounced a *haunted house*, and avoided accordingly. No one inhabited it but Vanderscamp’s shrew of a widow, and old Pluto, and they were considered but little better than its hobgoblin visitors. Pluto grew more and more haggard and

morose, and looked more like an imp of darkness than a human being. He spoke to no one, but went about muttering to himself; or, as some hinted, talking with the devil, who, though unseen, was ever at his elbow. Now and then he was seen pulling about the bay alone, in his skiff, in dark weather, or at the approach of night-fall; nobody could tell why, unless on an errand to invite more guests from the gallows. Indeed it was affirmed that the Wild Goose still continued to be a house of entertainment for such guests, and that on stormy nights, the blue chamber was occasionally illuminated, and sounds of diabolical merriment were overheard, mingling with the howling of the tempest. Some treated these as idle stories, until on one such night, it was about the time of the equinox, there was a horrible uproar in the Wild Goose, that could not be mistaken. It was not so much the sound of revelry, however, as strife, with two or three piercing shrieks, that pervaded every part of the village. Nevertheless, no one thought of hastening to the spot. On the contrary, the honest burghers of Communi-paw drew their night-caps over their ears, and buried their heads under the bed-clothes, at the thoughts of Vanderscamp and his gallows companions.

The next morning, some of the bolder and more curious undertook to reconnoitre. All was quiet and lifeless at the Wild Goose. The door yawned wide open, and had evidently been open all night, for the storm had beaten into the house. Gathering more courage from the silence and apparent desertion, they gradually ventured over the threshold. The house had indeed the air of having been possessed by devils.

Every thing was topsy turvy ; trunks had been broken open, and chests of drawers and corner cupboards turned inside out, as in a time of general sack and pillage ; but the most woful sight was the widow of Yan Yost Vandercamp, extended a corpse on the floor of the blue chamber, with the marks of a deadly gripe on the wind-pipe.

All now was conjecture and dismay at Communipaw ; and the disappearance of old Pluto, who was no where to be found, gave rise to all kinds of wild surmises. Some suggested that the negro had betrayed the house to some of Vanderscamp's bucaniering associates, and that they had decamped together with the booty ; others surmised that the negro was nothing more nor less than a devil incarnate, who had now accomplished his ends, and made off with his dues.

Events, however, vindicated the negro from this last imputation. His skiff was picked up, drifting about the bay, bottom upward, as if wrecked in a tempest ; and his body was found, shortly afterward, by some Communipaw fishermen, stranded among the rocks of Gibbet-Island, near the foot of the pirates' gallows. The fishermen shook their heads, and observed that old Pluto had ventured once too often to invite Guests from Gibbet-Island.

CHILDHOOD;



CHILDHOOD.

'Ox gentle bud, that bloomest in the morn,
When Phoebus crimson's o'er the eastern sky,
Long may thy tender blushing face adorn
The stem which beareth thee !'

LAY OF THE MOSS ROSE.

If you have ever visited the good old village of Hampden, you cannot but have noticed the number and beauty of the children who throng its streets, building castles, not of air but of mud, or trooping in noisy procession down its lanes and alleys. The village itself is one of those sweet-faced remnants of antiquity, which are to be seen here and there, (alas ! that they are so few !) scattered over the early settled portions of our country. One long winding street, flanked by rows of stately poplar and button-wood trees, with a sprinkling of sycamores and Chinas, and bearing the somewhat invidious appellation of Main-street—for what reason it would be hard to say, inasmuch as it is the only thing that presents the slightest claim to the name of street—is well garnished with a double row of queer-looking,

old-fashioned houses, whose one storied brick fronts, and moss-grown, broken-backed roofs, give a delightful image of the comfort and simplicity of the olden time in Virginia.

If you pass through in the summer, the doors and windows are all open. Hall and parlor, dining-room and chamber, are equally free to the view of every lounge. A venerable old lady, surrounded by females in regular gradation of age, from fifteen years and upward, may be seen cozily seated in the wide, breezy hall, sewing and chatting, and not without an eye to any new face that may chance to pass along the street. A female servant, perhaps, may be detected in adjusting her cape, or ogling her ebony charms, in the mirror of the now deserted parlor. Ducks standing on one foot, young cocks practising their first lessons in crowing—a very nervous kind of noise, by the way, and generally accompanied with a drawing up of one leg, not unlike those twitchings at his pantaloons which usually accompany the tyro's first efforts at declamation—and old cocks, strutting in a slow, aristocratic manner, with their lady-hens and their jealously-guarded brood; may be seen in the sunny court-yard behind: while an equally numerous brood of small ladies and gentlemen—from the chubby-faced school-boy to the little 'squab,' who has just acquired experience enough in this world's ways to work himself along on the soft grass, by dint of wriggling and kicking with hands and heels, or to scream with a new burst of laughter at every odd face, which Bill, the curly-headed rogue! is making for his amusement—are rolling and tumbling on the shady grass-plot in front. Few men

are to be seen. It is morning, and they are all off on business or pleasure, or, what is more likely, are snoozing away in some quiet apartment up stairs. A few negroes, of both sexes, may be seen laughing and talking at the lower end of the town, near the wharf, or leaning, with a happy forgetfulness of this world's cares, against the sunny side of an old-fashioned ware-house.

But every thing has the same staid, respectable appearance. There are no signs of confusion or bustle. The grass grows green and tempting, between the bricks which pave the side-walks, leaving, however, a narrow path for the accommodation of pedestrians. The farmer's team, destined, God willing, to accomplish its ten miles in as many hours, trudges slowly onward, picking the way with as much certainty as if the driver, who is comfortably snoring within the covered wagon, were awake to direct it. A few weather-beaten old schooners disembark their monthly cargo of rats at the wharf. And though one suspicious movement has been going on by which a dashing new draw-bridge has taken the place of the firm beams and boards, which once said to vessels, 'Thus far shall ye come and no farther,' the town is evidently far behind this generation of railroads and racket, in every thing that goes under the name of 'improvement.'

Time and your patience, reader, would fail me, were I to go on describing all the beauties of my native place. Reclined on yon grassy knoll, in the shade of those consecrated elms, it has been the solace of thirty years to drink in the sweet sounds of life and enjoyment, as they floated up amid the still-

ness of a summer's eve: the merry laugh of children engaged in their evening gambols; the low, faint hum of conversation; the bark of some restless dog; the lowing of cows: the boisterous mirth of the negroes; all softened into a plaintive hum by the distance, chime delightfully in with the din of the insects, which make night vocal with their chirping, and relieve a silence that might otherwise be oppressive. Here have I loved to lie, night after night, in a delicious reverie, gazing upon the glorious heavens above, or watching the lights of the village beneath, with a pleasure unconscious of sameness. Every familiar sound brings a throb to my bosom as exquisite and thrilling, as when my blood boiled with the intenser feelings of youth. I have never travelled—nor have I ever desired to. I care not for scenery; for in yon blue fields of the skies, I can see brighter landscapes than the Rhine or the Alps could afford me. I care not for wealth: then, why should I launch my bark among the cross currents of men's passions and interests, when it is now so safely and snugly moored in this quiet haven? I am a lover. But HOME is the object of my idolatry. I love my native place, and I love all that is in it. I love her young men and maidens; her old men and children; her venerable houses; her serpentine street winding so *naturally* along. I love to stroll among the sweet nooks of the neighborhood; to sip the cool water under the great vine-mantled oak, that shadows the sparkling eddies of 'Cool Spring;' to follow the playful windings of the 'branches,' which flow on in their sandy beds, at the bottom of *each* wooded 'gully;' in short, I love every sound,

and sight, and taste, and smell of home, with all the passion of the most ardent lover.

But, as I have hinted before, it is in the number of the children, that my own Hampden holds a decided preëminence. They are so simple and primitive, too, so unlike the rude school-boys and misses of other towns, that I like to forget my years, and to kneel on all fours, and become, for a moment, as one of them. My own house, alas! is desolate; (I am a bachelor, and may some day tell why;) but my neighbors are blessed indeed. Seven rosy boys, and five blushing girls, with two or three others, of whose gender I am not so certain, have learned to make my dwelling their home, and to cheer the lone bachelor's heart with their innocent prattle. There seems something in the very air of the place favorable to family increase. Whether it is that the town is growing old, and 'running to seed' as a natural consequence, or whether its quiet, heavenly situation renders it a fit soil for these sweet blossoms of humanity, certain it is, that there has been, as far back as I can remember, a constant, steady supply of children, which is truly wonderful. My pew in church is immediately behind that of a worthy lady, who has been strenuously engaged, for many years back, in rearing up children for the commonwealth. And not one of those years has past, without my devotions being disturbed by a sweet-faced little tempter, who *will* kneel upon the seat, and try to provoke me into a romp. With her large blue eyes, and her prim mouth, full of comic gravity, turned toward me, how can I be serious? I try to frown, but I smile, and the little rogue, taking advantage of my weakness, leaves no

means untried to disturb my devotion. It is in vain, too, that her mother, in a whisper loud enough for half the church to hear, threatens to send her home ; and, in order to keep her quiet, sets sister Jane alongside of her ; a prim, sober-looking little lady, whom I with difficulty recognise as the one who three years ago performed exactly the same part in church that little Mary is now acting. And so they go on from year to year. Every summer, a new one comes to church, and takes the place nearest the pew door ; while her predecessor, now sobered into a young lady, sits down on the right side of her mother. And it is the same all over the church. So gradually does one crop follow another, that I can hardly perceive a difference between the successive generations ; but to all intents and purposes, I see the same set of young ones with whom I played twenty years ago.

There are certain manifest signs, however, which inform me when any new adventurer is landing on our shores. In my constant visits among the neighbors, both those who have long lived together in conjugal bliss, and those who, having just bought their tickets in the grand lottery, are anxiously scanning whether it be blank or prize ; I often notice, with the curious eye of a bachelor, those slight tokens which tell the wise that a new guest is expected. In the new families, especially, the signs are not to be mistaken. Occasional glimpses of very small shirts and caps, and several otherwise unintelligible articles of clothing, convey an information more certain than words. A mysterious cradle, perhaps, may meet my eye in some out-of-the-way corner of the house ; there

begins to be a strange seriousness in the looks of the young husband ; and, altogether, an atmosphere of mystery pervades the establishment, and gives to every familiar face and object a hue which is as certainly indicative of some expected change, as the murky stillness of a sultry day is the forerunner of a storm.

But what a joyous-melancholy day is that, which ushers a new soul into the world ! The blinds of the house are all closed ; the doors fast shut ; and all is silent, till a low voice of wailing may be heard through the muffled chambers, like the sigh of a dying gale. What an expression, too, may be seen in the husband's face ! Like a timid conjuror, who has said his charm, and stands tremblingly awaiting the fiend's arrival, almost hoping the exorcism may fail, he seems at a loss how to view his unexpected bliss. His brow is cloudy ; his eye distracted. Uncertain how to act, he peers anxiously around, and hopes and fears, and fears and hopes, until at last his suspense is changed into joy, and he clasps his wailing image in his arms. Interesting little stranger ! Thou little knowest what anxious hearts have beat for thy safety ! Cast, as saith a worthy ancient, like a shipwrecked mariner, naked and destitute, upon this dreary strand, to those standing upon the beach, and looking into the mist for some glimmering of the coming sail, thou, puling babe as thou art, hast been of far more interest, than the highest of those who sit upon thrones, and build their towers upon the shattered landmarks of their neighbors. And what a nest of love, too, is prepared for thy reception, in the hearts

of a father and mother! From the savage hovel,
where

——— 'the dusky mother pressed
Her new-born infant with a rapturous thrill
Of unimagined love,'

to the glittering palace of luxury, where an excessive polish has lessened the radiating powers of the heart, and substituted smoothness for warmth, nature still asserts her prerogative, in this at least, and binds the mother to the babe, with 'cords of perdurable toughness.' Whatever may be its destiny afterward, the child has little cause to complain of its first reception on earth.

It has been my favorite employment, for thirty years, to watch these fair buds, as they gradually expand, and merge into the green fruit of boyhood, or ripen to the maturity of man. The very appearance of infancy has something in unison with the nobler feelings of the heart. Its helplessness, its tender outlines, its pure and healthy complexion, like snow unsullied by the earth, convey an idea of love and innocence, that wakes the airy harp of the soul, and draws a strange wild music from its strings. It is the magical influence of this little charmer, which binds the domestic circle. Even its tricks and petty passions, proceeding from selfishness, have something eloquent in them. What a transforming power must a babe possess, when, as I have often observed, its tender arms can stay the wild young rake in his course, and bind him down to the sameness of the fireside circle. Yet such is often the moral power of infants. From the first morning of joy, when the pale young

mother* presents her jewel to the arms of the blushing father, a new spring of feelings has gushed forth in his heart, and is there working deep but silent channels for its streams. He feels that he is another man. He looks down upon earth, and sees a bright hue of sunshine mellowing the roughness of its path; he looks up toward heaven, and finds no difficulty in conceiving a bliss, of which he has had a foretaste on earth.

In my bachelor visitations to my married friends, I have often chuckled over the bashfulness, contending with love, which distinguishes the YOUNG FATHER. In the pride of his heart, perhaps, when his little man has first given evidence of that degree of mental exertion called 'taking notice,' he clasps the crowing baby in his arms; he rests its lily feet upon his knees; he endures with philosophic patience all the 'gouging,' and pulling, and kicking, with which the young hero may testify his triumph; and while the young mother stands by, her eyes beaming with mingled love and pride, he becomes warmer in his romps; makes faces, as the nerveless fingers of the little one seek, with more earnestness, his eyes, or pull with a greater effort at his lips; and amid screams of laughter, he chases the flying hours, until at length a 'pale cast of thought' flits over the baby's face, like a cloud in a summer sky. This is the signal for immediate seriousness. The father grows grave—then frightened. He raises him gently from his lap, and with a

* 'AND when thou think'st upon the cause,
That paleness will have charms for thee!'

single exclamation of 'Take him, mother!' consigns the precious charge to her arms, and, darting a hasty glance at his 'pants,' he walks in silence from the room.

Nor do we bachelors always escape with impunity. Anxious to win a smile from some fond mother, more than one of us may have dared to approach, with a kiss, the hallowed lips of her darling. But mark the quick wing of vengeance! Darting from its lurking place in the mouth, out flies the little doubled fist, and slams a well beslabbered biscuit into the face of the intruder. He recoils, with his 'reeking honors fresh upon him,' and the little squab coos in triumph at his failure.

This habit of using its fingers, whether it arise from 'combativeness,' as the phrenologists would call it, or from 'outdacious himpidence,' as 'old Aunt Rachel' would say, has always made me very cautious in my approaches to infants. Beside, I have noticed that the little wretches are not without a sense of the humorous. They can always tell when they have put any of their friends in an awkward situation; and no one enjoys the joke so much as themselves. Nothing can be more comic, than the look of mingled fright and pleasure which they assume, when they have done any work of mischief; and nothing more irresistible than the joyous crow they give, when they have lost the mingling of fear, and reach a tower of safety in the arms of a mother or a nurse. Their pugnacious qualities are developed sooner than any others. They punch, and 'gouge,' and kick, and scream, through all opposition. And that mingled generosity and selfishness with which they giveaway

their play-things, and straitway demand them again, forms an excellent comment upon the virtues of riper years. They are fond of seeing folks happy. And they evince their fondness, by taking things out of their own mouths to put them in those of their friends. But what I consider most remarkable, is their great curiosity. They not only fix the big round eye of inquiry on every external object, but, like true philosophers, observe the *γυμνὸν σκαυτοῦ* of the Greeks. Often have I watched the movements of a youthful sage, who has just made the discovery that he has a big-toe. With what a sagacious air does he eye it round and round ; how serious and sober his looks ; how he handles, and tugs at, the newly-discovered member, until at last, by too hard a pull, he finds that it is *bonâ fide* a part of himself ; and his investigation, like those of older philosophers, ends only in tears.

Some people love to plague babies : they tease them, and vex them, and take a savage pleasure in their cries. I often walk the streets with a waggish acquaintance of mine, who never fails, when he sees a baby ahead, looking back over its nurse's shoulder, to salute it with such horrid gimaces, as would pickle a barrel of cucumbers, if placed in his way. This, of course, sets the infant screaming ; and the poor nurse, who looks round and sees only two gentlemen conversing, searches in vain for the secret pin ! I never join in such wicked amusements. And I counsel all nurses, who are placed in such a situation, to look carefully around, to see whether the gentlemen behind seems particularly grave and innocent ; and

if he does, to charge him boldly with the deed. Babies should have the benefit of the law.

Poor little things ! Theirs is a strange mixture of calm and of storm. One moment screaming, as if racked to death, the next laughing at some novel toy, they pursue, not the 'even' or the 'noiseless' tenor of their way, with a number of jogs and jolts, which make up in frequency, if not in intensity, for the greater ups and downs of after life. We hardly dare to say that theirs is a life of happiness, for we have no means of knowing. But when we look upon the fine blue eyes of an intelligent child, wafted like a bubble on the waves of existence, and glowing with all the rainbow tints of health and spirits, and then upon a poor sick infant, reduced to a skeleton by the lean hand of Sickness, or whirled, with a quickening motion, in the eddy that leads to the jaws of death, we cannot help admitting the fact, that even the pure brow of childhood is branded with the curse of Cain ; that he is sent forth, ere Reason has taken her throne, an outcast and vagabond upon the face of the earth. Death has fixed his broadest seal upon the brightest page of existence. Nature puts forth her thousand buds on the trees, and renders spring frolicsome, by filling air, earth, and water, with a fresh supply of young and beautiful creatures. But of these, how few ever come to maturity ! The buds are scattered in the breeze ; the bleak winds howl over the cold, stiff form of the once frisky lamb : and the sweet bud of immortality, which promised so fragrant an opening, is gathered to adorn the icy coronet of death.

In my frequent romps with the children, I have

always loved to notice how early the difference develops itself in the dispositions and carriage of the two sexes. Long before he has displaced the unmanly gown for the breeches, the boy shows himself formed of grosser elements, by his rude and boisterous actions, while the girl is as early known by a certain primness and decorum, and a slight tinge of affectation, which seems proper to the sex. Their behavior to strangers is entirely different. The boy comes forward with a bold, confident air, as if he meant to take the heart by storm ; he has a thousand questions to ask, and unless checked, is apt to weary, by his talkativeness. But not so with the girl. She first peeps at the visitor from behind her mother's chair ; then slowly ventures out from her place of safety ; pouts her rosy lips ; looks out of the corners of her eyes ; and if she is at last tempted into the stranger's arms, receives his caresses in modest silence, hanging down her head, and hardly venturing an answer to his simplest question. She shows a motherly care, too, for her wild young brother. She is fond of holding his head in her lap, and lulling him asleep. She loves to have gloves on her hand, and a reticule, with a handkerchief stuffed in it, which she takes great pride in folding. And when her brothers have ruined a parsnip-bed, by digging after babies, it is she who dresses the young inanimates, and tends them with a mother's care. Nor is she, in other respects, without the use of her hands. She can apply a box to the ears of a naughty brother with an emphasis and decorum that would not disgrace a lady of thirty. She has already learned to stroke down her gown, and shows particular expertness in that art which the la-

dies call 'fixing themselves.' And all these accomplishments are served up together, upon a rich ground of modesty, which relieves their more glaring tints, and makes the colors harmonize with the most lovely and delicate hues. This distinction in her favor is often a lasting one. Little girls, of any age, have a peculiar tact in noticing any slight shade of sorrow, especially upon the face of a mother ; and they seldom fail to show their sympathy by sober silence. Their better soul is born, before their reason buds. And perhaps of all the beautiful things upon earth, there is none more charming, than the quiet looks and modest airs of a sweet young girl, before she has gone to school, and been taught how to giggle. There is a flood of mind and feeling in the mellow glance of her eye ; a thrilling sweetness in the tones of her voice ; an artless playfulness in her very affectations, which can melt even the bachelor's soul, and send the most exquisite throbs along the heart-strings of a father. She reigns the queen of hearts, before she has learned the language of love.

My next door neighbor is peculiarly happy in the management of his children, which makes his lads and lasses the sweetest playmates alive. Their play-room is a perfect paradise. Young leather-faced ladies and gentlemen, ranged around on miniature chairs, may there be seen, looking with a marble rigidity of feature. Dogs and cats, taught by complicated machinery to make divers strange noises ; horses, whose prancing legs form a delightful contrast to the moveless carriages behind them ; pigs, cows, and squirrels, and birds of every shape and material, *are neatly* put up in their proper places ; all being un-

der the inspection of that busy little woman, my rosy-faced Mary. There is nothing like riot or disorganization under her rule. Not a doll is touched, nor a puppet moved, but in the way she wishes. With her lady-like ways, and motherly airs, she keeps all her young brothers and sisters in order; while there is always a prim turn at the corner of her mouth, which reveals the laugh lurking within. And when she does laugh, what a flood of life and melody! What music!—unrivalled by the strains of Paganini, or any other ninny, who ever charmed away the guineas of Europe! And what an expression, too! With your eye upon that sunny face, and your ear tuned to those honied tones, you might imagine Eden restored as when the sun first lighted upon it; ‘when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy! How skilful, too, is she in the management of parties!’ Being a decided favorite among the small folks, I often contrive to smuggle myself in, when any thing of that kind is going on among them. And then what a scene of enjoyment! Little Mary pours out tea for the assembled visitors. All are now grave and serious; for they feel that they are acting an important part. Their diminutive cups of tea are sipped with the utmost gravity and decorum. Every thing is on a scale of small magnificence. Little plates of sweet-meats; little baskets of cakes; nice little waiters; delicate little plates; and sweet little cups, like thimbles, in saucers of proportionate size: and then, above all, those dear little fingers; those sparkling eyes, in which glee and frolic seem almost ready to burst from the seriousness which the awful occasion has thrown around them; those comic

mouths, and dimpled cheeks, where the laughs and the graces seem dancing in mockery of the grave part which the urchins are acting.

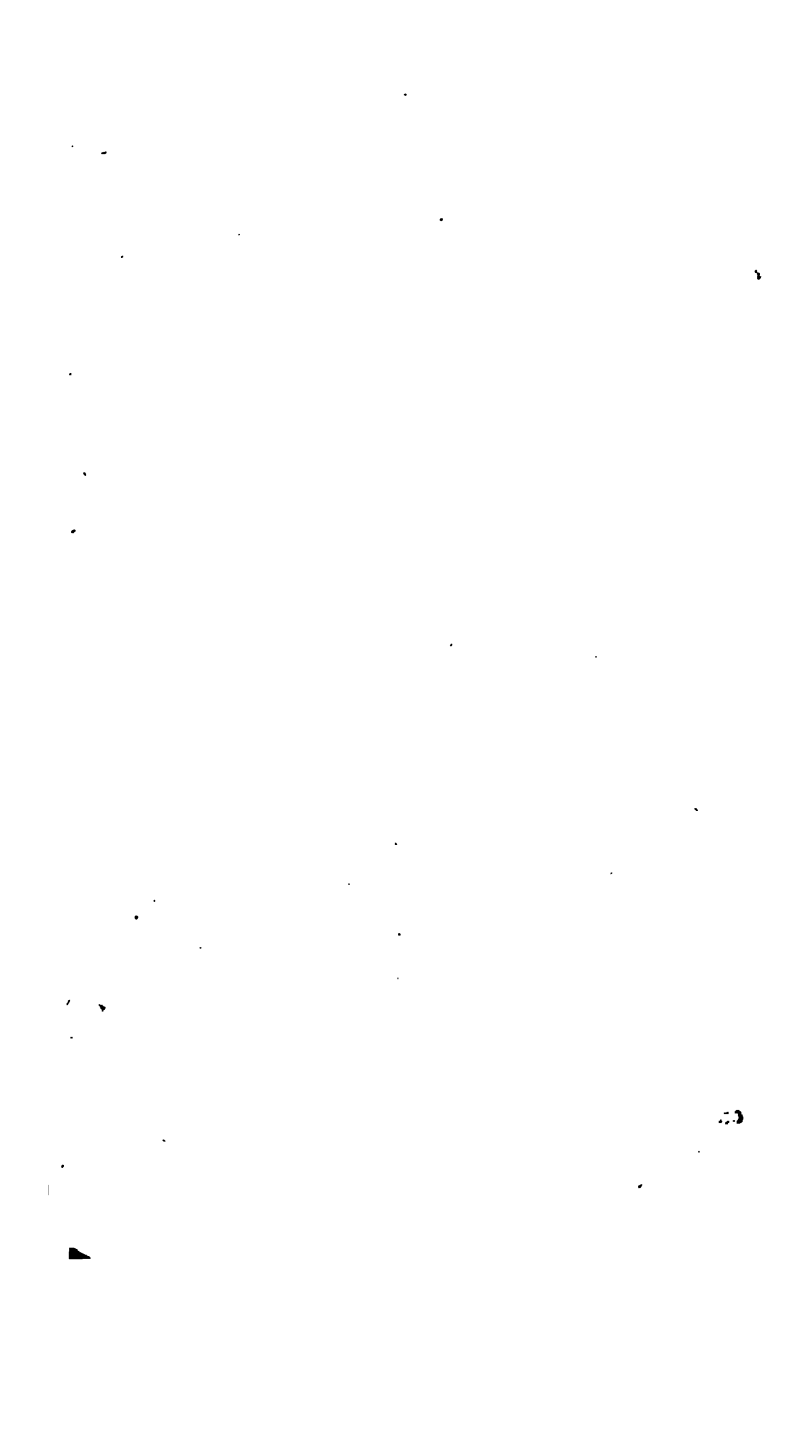
But supper is over. All now rush, with glee let loose, into the adjoining play-room. And now, what laughing and screaming ! what rolling and tumbling ! what a gushing flow of life and merriment ! what giggling ! what dressing of babies in one corner ! what boisterous fun among the boys, and what screams among the girls ! And what airs, too !—what a singing together, among those young sons of the morning !—what a shouting for joy, as the room becomes dizzy with their glee ! In the mean time, there sits my neighbor B——'s poor little William, all alone by himself. His face is pale and meagre. The hectic of consumption burns in one red spot on his cheek, and the lamp of life flickers with a strange unearthly glare in his eye. The poor little fellow has come with the others to the party, but his soul is not there. A thoughtfulness, beyond his years, has waved her pale sceptre over his brow ; and now he sits sorrowful among the gay, silent among the noisy ; his bright eye fixed upon vacancy, and his features hushed into a repose too awful for life. Imagination is already working ; and the messengers of thought from the unseen world may be almost seen coming and going, in the occasional quiver of his cheeks. Death has marked him for his victim, and mocks him with the fleeting phantoms of thought. Poor child ! His flower is withered in the bud, and must await a more genial clime to revive it. In the unseen fields of the stars, it may soon bloom fragrant

and lovely ; one of the ornaments of that garden, whose fruit is immortality and glory.

Childhood is never without its romance. It has a world peculiar to itself ; a May-day world of rains and sunshine ; of the flower opening for a moment, and then closing its leaves ; a world whose fleeting impressions of joy and beauty are too soon dispelled by the harsher realities of life. Memory cannot always recall them. And though in after years we may sometime discern some far-away island, mantled with beauty, and hanging, like some creation of the *fata morgana*, inverted over the misty waters of the past, it is only a solitary image, so unconnected with every thing else, that we can only wonder at its existence. But little as I have to rest upon, I love to build up my castles in these fairy spots of purity and innocence ; and, while I recline on my favorite knoll, with the starry heavens above, and the mellow sounds of earth beneath, I weave the slight fabrics of imagination, and people them with those little beings, whose voices are music to my ears. I follow the wild young creatures in their devious course through the day ; and, in fancy, I follow their thoughts during the night. I love to mingle with the spirits who guard their pillows. And when one of them departs from among us, I picture bright fields, where they stray by the sides of sunny streams, and chase the butterflies of pleasure, through an eternity of bliss. I listen with interest to all their childish prattle. With their little arms around my neck, and their sweet faces turned up to mine, I hear their most trifling adventures, charmed with the music of innocence and glee. I love, too, to have them as listeners ; to tell them of

giants, and fairies, and all the mystic creatures of fancy ; of cruel men, who eat little boys and girls at a morsel, but are horribly punished for their wickedness ; of the bright angels who take pity upon the children of men, and hover around their couches. I introduce them to the broad face of nature. I point them to the boundless glories of the milky-way, and I tell them how their little brothers or sisters, who have died in the bud, are now shining, bright as the stars, and winging their joyous flight over the star-spangled fields of ether. I show them the polar star ; and tell them of the great ships wandering on the hoary deep, and of the poor sailor, that shuttle of fortune, tossed from shore to shore, in the great web of commerce, until he 'sinks like a bubble in the yest of waves.' And I show them the bear, the crown, the monsters who keep watch on the zodiac, and Orion, with one knee resting on the horizon, while his huge body is drawn up into the fathomless concave of the skies. All this, and more, I show them, while their sweet faces beam with intelligence, and the low tones of inquiry come in whispers from their lips. And so we pass the hours, as the long winter night rolls away, shading no brighter scenes than our humble hearths at Hampden.

THE IRON FOOT-STEP.



THE IRON FOOT-STEP.

'WHAT may this mean, that thou, dead corpse! again
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous!

Most families, I believe, have their traditionary ghost story; which, when narrated to the group that gathers round the wintry fire-side, excites, according to the age and character of the listeners, terror, sympathy, doubt, incredulity, or ridicule. Still it continues to be told, even by those who are urgent in their disavowal of belief in supernatural appearances: the story is kept alive, and recollected in after life; for the bias is a strong one of the mind, to dwell even on the shadows that pertain to that world of untried being, which approaches toward us with its slow and noiseless, but irresistible and overwhelming movement.

I remember in my youth to have listened with my whole heart to the following remarkable incident, as one which had undoubtedly occurred a few years before in the Island of Dominica.

During a season of great mortality among the inhabitants of that island in the year——, a veteran

Scottish regiment was stationed upon the high bluff of land that forms one point of a crescentular bay, and overlooks the town and harbor. Inland, toward the east, a small plain extends itself; while on the west and north, which is nearest the shore, and almost overhanging it, were several long one-story buildings, hastily erected of wood, for the accommodation of the officers of the corps, and consisting all of three or four rooms on each end, with a piazza on the side toward the sea, extending the whole length of the structure, and forming a shaded and agreeable promenade during the earlier part of the day. The rooms opened upon the piazza, and communicated with each other by means of a side door, which was occasionally left open for the freer circulation of air.

In one of these barracks were quartered three officers of the regiment, Major Hamilton, Captain Gordon, and a third whose name I cannot at this moment recall. Major Hamilton's apartment was in the centre. He had lost a leg in the service, and usually wore a wooden pin, or stick, shod with iron; and being an alert man, fond of exercise, used to walk up and down this piazza for hours together, stopping occasionally at Gordon's door or window, and sometimes looking in at that of the other officer, exchanging a cheerful word with them as they sat each in his apartment, endeavoring to beguile the time with dressing, reading, writing, thoughts of promotion, of home, and of a speedy and happy return to Britain.

The sound of the Major's step was peculiar. It was only the blow given by the iron ferrule at the *end of his wooden leg* that was heard; for, although

a stout man, he trod lightly with the remaining foot, and heavily only with the wooden substitute, which gave forth its note at short intervals, as he paced to and fro, so regularly, that there was a certain pleasure in listening to it.

Sounds that strike the ear in this measured way, affect us more than others. The attention becomes engaged, and they grow emphatic as we listen. The calker's hammer-stroke, as it flies from the dock-yard of the busy port, across some placid bay into the green and peaceful country, is an instance of this truth; the songster has it, in the line,

‘His very step hath music in’t,
When he comes up the stairs;’

and LAMB felt it, when he said of his physician, that ‘there was healing in the creak of his shoes,’ as he approached his apartment. Associated with this measured movement of the Major, was his deep cheery voice, that made light of danger and difficulty; whether on the field of battle, or as now amid the sickness, which in mockery of the beauty of tropical skies and scenery, was devastating the colony at this melancholy period.

This sickness proved fatal to several officers of the regiment, and after some time, Major Hamilton was taken down with it. It was a fever, attended with delirium. The Major was confident of recovery; and indeed, from the great equanimity and happy temperament of his patient, his physician had hopes almost to the last. These, however, were not destined to be realized. He expired the seventh day after he was seized, while endeavoring to speak to

his friend Captain Gordon, and was buried under arms at sunset of the same day.

Now it was on the second night after this mournful event, that Gordon, having retired to bed rather later than usual, found himself unexpectedly awake. He was not conscious of any distressing thought or dream which should have occasioned this shortened slumber, and as he commonly made but one nap of the night, and his rest had been latterly broken by the kind offices he had rendered his comrade, he was half surprised at finding himself awake. He touched his repeater, and found it only past one o'clock. He turned on the other side, and composed himself afresh. Thoughts of his friend came over his heart, as his cheek reached the pillow, and he said: 'Poor Hamilton! Well, God have mercy upon us!'

He felt at the moment that some one near him said 'Amen!' with much solemnity. He was effectually roused, and asked, 'Who is there?'

There was no reply. His voice seemed to echo into Hamilton's late apartment, and he then remembered that the door was open that communicated between the two rooms. He listened intently, but heard nothing save the beating of his own heart. He said to himself, 'It is all mere imagination,' and again endeavored to compose himself, and think of something else. He laid his head once more upon the pillow, and then he distinctly heard, for the first time, the Major's well-known step. It was not a matter to be mistaken about. The ferrule sound, the pause for the foot, the sound again, measured in its *return*, as if all were again in life. He heard it first

upon the piazza, heard it approach, pass through the door from the piazza into the centre apartment, and there it seemed to pause ; as if the figure of the departed were standing on the other side of that open door, in the room it had so lately occupied.

Gordon rose. He went to the window that opened upon the piazza and looked out. The night was very beautiful ; the moon had gone down ; the sky was of the deepest azure, and the low dash of the waves upon the rocks, at the foot of the bluff, was the only thing that engaged his notice, except the extreme brightness and lucidity of a solitary star, that traced its glittering pathway of light toward him, across the distant waters of the ocean. All else was still and reposeful. 'It is very remarkable !' said he ; 'I could have sworn I heard it !' He turned toward the door that stood open between the two rooms. The Major's apartment was darkened by the shutters being closed, and he could distinguish nothing inside it. He wished the door were shut, but felt a repugnance at the idea of closing it ; and while he stood gazing into the dark room, the thought of being in the presence of a disembodied spirit rose in his mind ; and though a brave man, he could not immediately control the bristling sensation of terror that began to possess him. He longed for the voice of any living being ; and though for a moment the idea of ridicule deterred him, he determined on calling up the officer who occupied the other apartment.

He passed out on to the piazza, and as he approached the other extremity of the building, the sentinel on duty perceiving him, presented arms.

‘Have you been long stationed here?’ said Captain Gordon.

‘Half an hour,’ was the reply.

‘Did you—did you happen to see any one on the piazza, during that time?’

‘I did not!’

Gordon returned at once to his room, vexed with himself for having been the sport of an illusion of his own brain. He closed his door and window, and went to bed. He was now thoroughly awake, and had regained, as he thought, entire possession of his faculties. ‘My old comrade,’ said he, ‘what could he possibly want of me? We were always friends—kind-hearted, gallant fellow that he was! No man ever was his enemy, except upon the field itself. Why should I have dreaded to meet him, even if such an event could possibly be?’

And yet, so constituted are we, that a moment or two after this course of thought had occupied his mind, he was almost paralyzed with dread, by the recurrence of the same well-known step that now seemed pacing the dark and tenantless apartment. He even fancied an irregularity in it, that betokened, as he thought, some distress of mind; and all that he had ever heard of spirits revisiting the scenes of their mortal existence, to expiate some hidden crime, entered his imagination, and combined to make his situation awful and appalling. It was therefore with great earnestness that he exclaimed:

‘In the name of God, Hamilton, is that you?’

A voice, from the threshold of the communicating door, addressed him in tones that sank deeply into *his soul*:

‘Gordon, listen, but do not speak to me. In ten days you will apply for a furlough; it will not be granted to you. You will renew the application in three weeks and then it will be successful. Stay no longer in Scotland than may be necessary for the adjustment of your affairs. Go to London. Take lodgings at No. —, Jermyn-street. You will be shown into an apartment looking into a garden. Remove the panel from above the chimney-piece, and you will there find papers which establish the fact of my marriage, and will give you the address of my wife and son. Hasten, for they are in deep distress, and these papers will establish their rights. Do not forget me!’

Captain Gordon did not recollect how long he remained in the posture in which he had listened to the spirit of his departed friend; but when he arose, it was broad day. He dressed himself, and went to town; drew up a statement of the affair, and authenticated it by his oath. He had had no intention of quitting the colony during that year; but an arrival brought intelligence of the death of his father, and of his accession to a large estate. Within the ten days, he applied for a furlough; but such had been the mortality among the officers, that the commanding officer thought proper to refuse his request. Another arrival having however brought to the island a reinforcement for the garrison, he found the difficulty removed, upon a second application, in three weeks. He sailed for Scotland, arranged his affairs, and intended immediately afterward to have proceeded to London. He suffered, however, one agreeable engagement after another to retard his departure, and his friend’s con-

cerns, and the preternatural visit that he had received from him, were no longer impressed so vividly as at first upon his mind.

One night, however, after a social party of pleasure, he awoke without apparent cause, as he had done on the eventful night in Dominica, and to his utter consternation, the sound of the Major's iron step filled his ears.

He started from his bed immediately, rang up his servant, ordered post-horses, and lost not a moment upon the way, until he reached the house in Jermyn-street. He found the papers as he had expected. He relieved the widow and orphan of his unhappy friend, and established them as such in the inheritance to which they were entitled by his sudden death ; and the story reaching the ears of royalty, the young Hamilton was patronized by the Queen of England, and early obtained a commission in the army, to which he was attached, at the time this tale was told to me.

It is also known that Captain Gordon rose very high in his military career, and was throughout his life distinguished as a brave and honorable officer, and a fortunate general.

MOUNTJOY:

OR

SOME PASSAGES OUT OF THE LIFE OF A CASTLE-BUILDER.

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OR

SOME PASSAGES OUT OF THE LIFE OF A CASTLE-BUILDER.

BY GEOFFREY CRAYON, GENT.

I WAS born among romantic scenery, in one of the wildest parts of the Hudson, which at that time was not so thickly settled as at present. My father was descended from one of the old Huguenot families, that came over to this country on the revocation of the edict of Nantz. He lived in a style of easy, rural independence, on a patrimonial estate that had been for two or three generations in the family. He was an indolent, good-natured man, who took the world as it went, and had a kind of laughing philosophy, that parried all rubs and mishaps, and served him in the place of wisdom. This was the part of his character least to my taste; for I was of an enthusiastic, excitable temperament, prone to kindle up with new schemes and projects, and he was apt to dash my sallying enthusiasm by some unlucky joke; so that

whenever I was in a glow with any sudden excitement, I stood in mortal dread of his good-humor.

Yet he indulged me in every vagary ; for I was an only son, and of course a personage of importance in the household. I had two sisters older than myself, and one younger. The former were educated at New-York, under the eye of a maiden aunt ; the latter remained at home, and was my cherished playmate, the companion of my thoughts. We were two imaginative little beings, of quick susceptibility, and prone to see wonders and mysteries in every thing around us. Scarce had we learned to read, when our mother made us holiday presents of all the nursery literature of the day ; which at that time consisted of little books covered with gilt paper, adorned with 'cuts,' and filled with tales of fairies, giants, and enchanters. What draughts of delightful fiction did we then inhale ! My sister Sophy was of a soft and tender nature. She would weep over the woes of the Children in the Wood, or quake at the dark romance of Blue-Beard, and the terrible mysteries of the blue chamber. But I was all for enterprise and adventure. I burned to emulate the deeds of that heroic prince, who delivered the white cat from her enchantment ; or he of no less royal blood, and doughty emprise, who broke the charmed slumber of the Beauty in the Wood !

The house in which we lived, was just the kind of place to foster such propensities. It was a venerable mansion, half villa, half farm-house. The oldest part was of stone, with loop-holes for musketry, having served as a family fortress, in the time of the Indians. To this there had been made various addi-

tions, some of brick, some of wood, according to the exigencies of the moment ; so that it was full of nooks and crooks, and chambers of all sorts and sizes. It was buried among willows, elms, and cherry-trees, and surrounded with roses and holly-hocks, with honey suckle and sweet-brier clambering about every window. A brood of hereditary pigeons sunned themselves upon the roof ; hereditary swallows and martins built about the eaves and chimnies ; and hereditary bees hummed about the flower-beds.

Under the influence of our story-books every object around us now assumed a new character, and a charmed interest. The wild flowers were no longer the mere ornaments of the fields, or the resorts of the toilful bee ; they were the lurking places of fairies. We would watch the humming-bird, as it hovered around the trumpet creeper at our porch, and the butterfly as it flitted up into the blue air, above the sunny tree tops, and fancy them some of the tiny beings from fairy land. I would call to mind all that I had read of Robin Goodfellow, and his power of transformation. Oh how I envied him that power ! How I longed to be able to compress my form into utter littleness ; to ride the bold dragon-fly ; swing on the tall bearded grass ; follow the ant into his subterraneous habitation, or dive into the cavernous depths of the honeysuckle !

While I was yet a mere child, I was sent to a daily school, about two miles distant. The school-house was on the edge of a wood, close by a brook overhung with birches, alders, and dwarf willows. We of the school who lived at some distance, came with our dinners put up in little baskets. In the intervals

of school hours, we would gather round a spring, under a tuft of hazel-bushes, and have a kind of picnic ; interchanging the rustic dainties with which our provident mothers had fitted us out. Then, when our joyous repast was over, and my companions were disposed for play, I would draw forth one of my cherished story-books, stretch myself on the green sward, and soon lose myself in its bewitching contents.

I became an oracle among my school-mates, on account of my superior erudition, and soon imparted to them the contagion of my infected fancy. Often in the evening, after school hours, we would sit on the trunk of some fallen tree in the woods, and vie with each other in telling extravagant stories, until the whip-poor-will began his nightly moaning, and the fire-flies sparkled in the gloom. Then came the perilous journey homeward. What delight we would take in getting up wanton panics, in some dusky part of the wood ; scampering like frightened deer ; pausing to take breath ; renewing the panic, and scampering off again, wild with fictitious terror !

Our greatest trial was to pass a dark, lonely pool, covered with pond-lilies, peopled with bull-frogs and water snakes, and haunted by two white cranes. Oh ! the terrors of that pond ! How our little hearts would beat, as we approached it ; what fearful glances we would throw around ! And if by chance a plash of a wild duck, or the guttural twang of a bull-frog, struck our ears, as we stole quietly by—away we sped, nor paused until completely out of the woods. Then, when I reached home, what a world of adventures,

and imaginary terrors, would I have to relate to my sister Sophy !

As I advanced in years, this turn of mind increased upon me, and became more confirmed. I abandoned myself to the impulses of a romantic imagination, which controlled my studies, and gave a bias to all my habits. My father observed me continually with a book in my hand, and satisfied himself that I was a profound student ; but what where my studies ? Works of fiction ; tales of chivalry ; voyages of discovery ; travels in the East ; every thing, in short, that partook of adventure and romance. I well remember with what zest I entered upon that part of my studies, which treated of the heathen mythology and particularly of the sylvan deities. Then indeed my school-books became dear to me. The neighborhood was well calculated to foster the reveries of a mind like mine. It abounded with solitary retreats, wild streams, solemn forests, and silent valleys. I would ramble about for a whole day, with a volume of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in my pocket, and work myself into a kind of self-delusion, so as to identify the surrounding scenes with those of which I had just been reading. I would loiter about a brook that glided through the shadowy depths of the forest, picturing it to myself the haunt of Naiades. I would steal round some bushy copse that opened upon a glade, as if I expected to come suddenly upon Diana and her nymphs ; or to behold Pan and his satyrs bounding, with whoop and halloo, through the woodland. I would throw myself, during the panting heats of a summer noon, under the shade of some wide-spreading tree, and muse and dream away the hours, in a

state of mental intoxication. I drank in the very light of day, as nectar, and my soul seemed to bathe with ecstasy in the deep blue of a summer sky.

In these wanderings, nothing occurred to jar my feelings, or bring me back to the realities of life. There is a repose in our mighty forests, that gives full scope to the imagination. Now and then I would hear the distant sound of the wood-cutter's axe, or the crash of some tree which he had laid low ; but these noises, echoing along the quiet landscape, could easily be wrought by fancy into harmony with its illusions. In general, however, the woody recesses of the neighborhood were peculiarly wild and unfrequented. I could ramble for a whole day, without coming upon any traces of cultivation. The partridge of the wood scarcely seemed to shun my path, and the squirrel, from his nut-tree, would gaze at me for an instant, with sparkling eye, as if wondering at the unwonted intrusion.

I cannot help dwelling on this delicious period of my life ; when as yet I had known no sorrow, nor experienced any worldly care. I have since studied much, both of books and men, and of course have grown too wise to be so easily pleased ; yet with all my wisdom, I must confess I look back with a secret feeling of regret to the days of happy ignorance, before I had begun to be a philosopher.

It must be evident that I was in a hopeful training, for one who was to descend into the arena of life, and wrestle with the world. The tutor, also, who superintended my studies, in the more advanced stage of *my education*, was just fitted to complete the *fata*

morgana which was forming in my mind. His name was Glencoe. He was a pale, melancholy-looking man, about forty years of age ; a native of Scotland, liberally educated, and who had devoted himself to the instruction of youth, from taste rather than necessity ; for, as he said, he loved the human heart, and delighted to study it in its earlier impulses. My two elder sisters, having returned home from a city boarding-school, were likewise placed under his care, to direct their reading in history and belles-letters.

We all soon became attached to Glencoe. It is true, we were at first somewhat prepossessed against him. His meagre, pallid countenance, his broad pronunciation, his inattention to the little forms of society, and an awkward and embarrassed manner, on first acquaintance, were much against him ; but we soon discovered that under this unpromising exterior existed the kindest urbanity of temper ; the warmest sympathies ; the most enthusiastic benevolence. His mind was ingenious and acute. His reading had been various, but more abstruse than profound ; his memory was stored, on all subjects, with facts, theories, and quotations, and crowded with crude materials for thinking. These, in a moment of excitement, would be, as it were, melted down, and poured forth in the lava of a heated imagination. At such moments, the change in the whole man was wonderful. His meagre form would acquire a dignity and grace ; his long, pale visage would flash with a hectic glow ; his eyes would beam with intense speculation ; and there would be pathetic tones and deep modulations in his voice, that delighted the ear, and spoke movingly to the heart.

But what most endeared him to us, was the kindness and sympathy with which he entered into all our interests and wishes. Instead of curbing and checking our young imaginations with the reins of sober reason, he was a little too apt to catch the impulse, and be hurried away with us. He could not withstand the excitement of any sally of feeling or fancy ; and was prone to lend heightening tints to the illusive coloring of youthful anticipation.

Under his guidance, my sisters and myself soon entered upon a more extended range of studies ; but while they wandered, with delighted minds, through the wide field of history and belles-lettres, a nobler walk was opened to my superior intellect.

The mind of Glencoe presented a singular mixture of philosophy and poetry. He was fond of metaphysics, and prone to indulge in abstract speculations, though his metaphysics were somewhat fine spun and fanciful, and his speculations were apt to partake of what my father most irreverently termed ‘humbug.’ For my part, I delighted in them; and the more especially, because they set my father to sleep, and completely confounded my sisters. I entered, with my accustomed eagerness, into this new branch of study. Metaphysics were now my passion. My sisters attempted to accompany me, but they soon faltered, and gave out before they had got half way through Smith’s Theory of the Moral Sentiments. I, however, went on, exulting in my strength. Glencoe supplied me with books, and I devoured them with appetite, if not digestion. We walked and talked together under the trees before the house, or sat apart, like Milton’s angels, and held high converse

upon themes beyond the grasp of ordinary intellects. Glencoe possessed a kind of philosophic chivalry, in imitation of the old peripatetic sages, and was continually dreaming of romantic enterprises in morals, and splendid systems for the improvement of society. He had a fanciful mode of illustrating abstract subjects, peculiarly to my taste ; clothing them with the language of poetry, and throwing round them almost the magic hues of fiction. 'How charming,' thought I, 'is divine philosophy;' not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,

'But a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.'

I felt a wonderful self-complacency at being on such excellent terms with a man whom I considered on a parallel with the sages of antiquity, and looked down with the sentiment of pity on the feebleness of my sisters, who could comprehend nothing of metaphysics. It is true, when I attempted to study them by myself, I was apt to get in a fog ; but when Glencoe came to my aid, every thing was soon as clear to me as day. My ear drank in the beauty of his words ; my imagination was dazzled with the splendor of his illustrations. It caught up the sparkling sands of poetry that glittered through his speculations, and mistook them for the golden ore of wisdom. Struck with the facility with which I seemed to imbibe and relish the most abstract doctrines, I conceived a still higher opinion of my mental powers, and was convinced that I also was a philosopher.

I WAS NOW verging toward man's estate, and

though my education had been extremely irregular—following the caprices of my humor, which I mistook for the impulses of my genius—yet I was regarded with wonder and delight by my mother and sisters, who considered me almost as wise and infallible as I considered myself. This high opinion of me was strengthened by a declamatory habit, which made me an oracle and orator at the domestic board. The time was now at hand, however, that was to put my philosophy to the test.

We had passed through a long winter, and the spring at length opened upon us, with unusual sweetness. The soft serenity of the weather; the beauty of the surrounding country; the joyous notes of the birds; the balmy breath of flower and blossom, all combined to fill my bosom with indistinct sensations, and nameless wishes. Amid the soft seductions of the season, I lapsed into a state of utter indolence, both of body and mind.

Philosophy had lost its charms for me. Metaphysics—faugh! I tried to study; took down volume after volume, ran my eye vacantly over a few pages, and threw them by with distaste. I loitered about the house, with my hands in my pockets, and an air of complete vacancy. Something was necessary to make me happy; but what was that something? I sauntered to the apartments of my sisters, hoping their conversation might amuse me. They had walked out, and the room was vacant. On the table lay a volume which they had been reading. It was a novel. I had never read a novel, having conceived a contempt for works of the kind, from hearing them *universally* condemned. It is true, I had remarked

that they were as universally read ; but I considered them beneath the attention of a philosopher, and never would venture to read them, lest I should lessen my mental superiority in the eyes of my sisters. Nay, I had taken up a work of the kind, now and then, when I knew my sisters were observing me, looked into it for a moment, and then laid it down, with a slight supercilious smile. On the present occasion, out of mere listlessness, I took up the volume, and turned over a few of the first pages. I thought I heard some one coming, and laid it down. I was mistaken ; no one was near, and what I had read, tempted my curiosity to read a little farther. I leaned against a window-frame, and in a few minutes was completely lost in the story. How long I stood there reading, I know not, but I believe for nearly two hours. Suddenly, I heard my sisters on the stairs, when I thrust the book into my bosom, and the two other volumes, which lay near, into my pockets, and hurried out of the house to my beloved woods. Here I remained all day beneath the trees, bewildered, bewitched ; devouring the contents of these delicious volumes ; and only returned to the house when it was too dark to peruse their pages.

This novel finished, I replaced it in my sister's apartment, and looked for others. Their stock was ample, for they had brought home all that were current in the city ; but my appetite demanded an immense supply. All this course of reading was carried on clandestinely, for I was a little ashamed of it, and fearful that my wisdom might be called in question ; but this very privacy gave it additional zest. It was 'bread eaten in secret ;' it had the charm of a private amour.

But think what must have been the effect of such a course of reading, on a youth of my temperament and turn of mind ; indulged, too, amidst romantic scenery, and in the romantic season of the year. It seemed as if I had entered upon a new scene of existence. A train of combustible feelings were lighted up in me, and my soul was all tenderness and passion. Never was youth more completely love-sick, though as yet it was a mere general sentiment, and wanted a definite object. Unfortunately, our neighborhood was particularly deficient in female society, and I languished in vain for some divinity, to whom I might offer up this most uneasy burthen of affections. I was at one time seriously enamoured of a lady whom I saw occasionally in my rides, reading at the window of a country-seat ; and actually serenaded her with my flute ; when, to my confusion, I discovered that she was old enough to be my mother. It was a sad damper to my romance ; especially as my father heard of it, and made it the subject of one of those household jokes, which he was apt to serve up at every meal-time.

I soon recovered from this check, however, but it was only to relapse into a state of amorous excitement. I passed whole days in the fields, and along the brooks ; for there is something in the tender passion, that makes us alive to the beauties of nature. A soft sunshine morning infused a sort of rapture into my breast. I flung open my arms, like the Grecian youth in Ovid, as if I would take in and embrace the balmy atmosphere.* The song of the

* Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book vii.

birds melted me to tenderness. I would lie by the side of some rivulet, for hours, and form garlands of the flowers on its banks, and muse on ideal beauties, and sigh from the crowd of undefined emotions that swelled my bosom.

In this state of amorous delirium, I was strolling one morning along a beautiful wild brook, which I had discovered in a glen. There was one place where a small water-fall, leaping from among rocks into a natural basin, made a scene such as a poet might have chosen as the haunt of some shy Naiad. It was here I usually retired to banquet on my novels. In visiting the place this morning, I traced distinctly, on the margin of the basin, which was of fine clear sand, the prints of a female foot, of the most slender and delicate proportions. This was sufficient for an imagination like mine. Robinson Crusoe himself, when he discovered the print of a savage foot on the beach of his lonely island, could not have been more suddenly assailed with thick-coming fancies.

I endeavored to track the steps, but they only passed for a few paces along the fine sand, and then were lost among the herbage. I remained gazing in reverie upon this passing trace of loveliness. It evidently was not made by any of my sisters, for they knew nothing of this haunt; beside, the foot was smaller than theirs; it was remarkable for its beautiful delicacy.

My eye accidentally caught two or three half-withered wild flowers, lying on the ground. The unknown nymph had doubtless dropped them from her bosom! Here was a new document of taste and sentiment. I treasured them up as invaluable relics.

The place, too, where I found them, was remarkably picturesque, and the most beautiful part of the brook. It was overhung with a fine elm, entwined with grape-vines. She who could select such a spot, who could delight in wild brooks and wild flowers, and silent solitudes, must have fancy, and feeling and tenderness; and with all these qualities, she must be beautiful!

But who could be this Unknown, that had thus passed by, as in a morning dream, leaving merely flowers and fairy foot-steps, to tell of her loveliness! There was a mystery in it that bewildered me. It was so vague and disembodied, like those 'airy tongues that syllable men's names' in solitude. Every attempt to solve the mystery was vain. I could hear of no being in the neighborhood to whom this trace could be ascribed. I haunted the spot and became daily more and more enamoured. Never, surely, was passion more pure and spiritual, and never lover in more dubious situation. My case could be compared only to that of the amorous prince, in the fairy tale of Cinderella; but he had a glass slipper on which to lavish his tenderness. I, alas! was in love with a footstep!

The imagination is alternately a cheat and a dupe; nay more, it is the most subtle of cheats, for it cheats itself, and becomes the dupe of its own delusions. It conjures up 'airy nothings,' gives to them a 'local habitation and a name,' and then bows to their control as implicitly as though they were realities. Such was now my case. The good Numa could not more thoroughly have persuaded himself that the nymph Egeria hovered about her sacred fountain, and *communed* with him in spirit, than I had deceived

myself into a kind of visionary intercourse with the airy phantom fabricated in my brain. I constructed a rustic seat at the foot of the tree where I had discovered the footsteps. I made a kind of bower there, where I used to pass my mornings, reading poetry and romances. I carved hearts and darts on the tree, and hung it with garlands. My heart was full to overflowing, and wanted some faithful bosom into which it might relieve itself. What is a lover without a confidante? I thought at once of my sister Sophy, my early play-mate, the sister of my affections. She was so reasonable, too, and of such correct feelings, always listening to my words as oracular sayings, and admiring my scraps of poetry, as the very inspirations of the muse. From such a devoted, such a rational being, what secrets could I have?

I accordingly took her, one morning, to my favorite retreat. She looked around, with delighted surprise, upon the rustic seat, the bower, the tree carved with emblems of the tender passion. She turned her eyes upon me to inquire the meaning.

‘Oh, Sophy,’ exclaimed I, ‘clasping both her hands in mine, and looking earnestly in her face, ‘I am in love!’

She started with surprise.

‘Sit down,’ said I, ‘and I will tell you all.’

She seated herself upon the rustic bench, and I went into a full history of the footstep, with all the associations of idea that had been conjured up by my imagination.

Sophy was enchanted; it was like a fairy tale: She had read of such mysterious visitations in books, and the loves thus conceived were always for beings

of superior order, and were always happy. She caught the illusion, in all its force ; her cheek glowed ; her eye brightened.

‘I dare say she’s pretty,’ said Sophy.

‘Pretty!’ echoed I, ‘she is beautiful!’ I went through all the reasoning by which I had logically proved the fact to my own satisfaction. I dwelt upon the evidences of her taste, her sensibility to the beauties of nature ; her soft, meditative habit, that delighted in solitude ; ‘oh,’ said I, clasping my hands, ‘to have such a companion to wander through these scenes ; to sit with her by this murmuring stream ; to wreath garlands round her brows ; to hear the music of her voice mingling with the whisperings of these groves ; to —’

‘Delightful ! delightful!’ cried Sophy ; ‘what a sweet creature she must be ! She is just the friend I want. How I shall dote upon her ! Oh, my dear brother ! you must not keep her all to yourself. You must let *me* have some share of her !’

I caught her to my bosom : ‘You shall—you shall!’ cried I, ‘my dear Sophy ; we will all live for each other !’

THE conversation with Sophy heightened the illusions of my mind ; and the manner in which she had treated my day-dream, identified it with facts and persons, and gave it still more the stamp of reality. I walked about as one in a trance, heedless of the world around, and lapped in an elysium of the fancy.

In this mood I met, one morning, with Glencoe. He accosted me with his usual smile, and was pro-

ceeding with some general observations, but paused and fixed on me an inquiring eye.

‘What is the matter with you?’ said he; ‘you seem agitated; has any thing in particular happened?’

‘Nothing,’ said I, hesitating; ‘at least nothing worth communicating to you.’

‘Nay, my dear young friend,’ said he, ‘whatever is of sufficient importance to agitate you, is worthy of being communicated to me.’

‘Well; but my thoughts are running on what you would think a frivolous subject.’

‘No subject is frivolous, that has the power to awaken strong feelings.’

‘What think you,’ said I, hesitating, ‘what think you of love?’

Glencoe almost started at the question. ‘Do you call that a frivolous subject?’ replied he. Believe me, there is none fraught with such deep, such vital interest. If you talk, indeed, of the capricious inclination awakened by the mere charm of perishable beauty, I grant it to be idle in the extreme; but that love which springs from the concordant sympathies of virtuous hearts; that love which is awakened by the perception of moral excellence, and fed by meditation on intellectual as well as personal beauty; that is a passion which refines and ennobles the human heart. Oh, where is there a sight more nearly approaching to the intercourse of angels, than that of two young beings, free from the sins and follies of the world, mingling pure thoughts, and looks, and feelings, and becoming as it were soul of one soul, and heart of one heart! How exquisite the silent converse that they hold; the soft devotion of the eye,

that needs no words to make it eloquent ! Yes, my friend, if there be any thing in this weary world worthy of heaven, it is the pure bliss of such a mutual affection !

The words of my worthy tutor overcame all farther reserve. 'Mr. Glencoe,' cried I, blushing still deeper, 'I am in love !'

'And is that what you were ashamed to tell me ? Oh never seek to conceal from your friend so important a secret. If your passion be unworthy, it is for the steady hand of friendship to pluck it forth ; if honorable, none but an enemy would seek to stifle it. On nothing does the character and happiness so much depend, as on the first affection of the heart. Were you caught by some fleeting and superficial charm—a bright eye, a blooming cheek, a soft voice, or a voluptuous form—I would warn you to beware ; I would tell you that beauty is but a passing gleam of the morning, a perishable flower ; that accident may becloud and blight it, and that at best it must soon pass away. But were you in love with such a one as I could describe ; young in years, but still younger in feelings ; lovely in person, but as a type of the mind's beauty ; soft in voice, in token of gentleness of spirit ; blooming in countenance, like the rosy tints of morning kindling with the promise of a genial day ; an eye beaming with the benignity of a happy heart ; a cheerful temper, alive to all kind impulses, and frankly diffusing its own felicity ; a self-poised mind, that needs not lean on others for support ; an elegant taste, that can embellish solitude, and furnish out its own enjoyments' —

‘My dear Sir,’ cried I, for I could contain myself no longer, ‘you have described the very person!’

‘Why then, my dear young friend,’ said he, affectionately pressing my hand, ‘in God’s name, love on!’

For the remainder of the day, I was in some such state of dreamy beatitude as a Turk is said to enjoy, when under the influence of opium. It must be already manifest, how prone I was to bewilder myself with picturings of the fancy, so as to confound them with existing realities. In the present instance, Sophy and Glencoe had contributed to promote the transient delusion. Sophy, dear girl, had as usual joined with me in my castle-building, and indulged in the same train of imaginings, while Glencoe, duped by my enthusiasm, firmly believed that I spoke of a being I had seen and known. By their sympathy with my feelings, they in a manner became associated with the Unknown in my mind, and thus linked her with the circle of my intimacy.

In the evening, our family party was assembled in the hall, to enjoy the refreshing breeze. Sophy was playing some favorite Scotch airs on the piano, while Glencoe, seated apart, with his forehead resting on his hand, was buried in one of those pensive reveries that made him so interesting to me.

‘What a fortunate being I am!’ thought I, ‘blessed with such a sister and such a friend! I have only to find out this amiable Unknown, to wed her, and be happy! What a paradise will be my home, graced with a partner of such exquisite refinement! It will be a perfect fairy bower, buried among sweets and roses. Sophy shall live with us, and be the

companion of all our enjoyments. Glencoe, too, shall no more be the solitary being that he now appears. He shall have a home with us. He shall have his study, where, when he pleases, he may shut himself up from the world, and bury himself in his own reflections. His retreat shall be sacred ; no one shall intrude there ; no one but myself, who will visit him now and then, in his seclusion, where we will devise grand schemes together for the improvement of mankind. How delightfully our days will pass, in a round of rational pleasures and elegant employments ! Sometimes we will have music ; sometimes we will read ; sometimes we will wander through the flower-garden, when I will smile with complacency on every flower my wife has planted ; while, in the long winter evenings, the ladies will sit at their work, and listen, with hushed attention, to Glencoe and myself, as we discuss the abstruse doctrines of metaphysics.'

From this delectable reverie, I was startled by my father's slapping me on the shoulder : 'What possesses the lad ?' cried he ; 'here have I been speaking to you half a dozen times, without receiving an answer.'

'Pardon me, Sir,' replied I ; 'I was so completely lost in thought, that I did not hear you.'

'Lost in thought ! And pray what were you thinking of ? Some of your philosophy, I suppose.'

'Upon my word,' said my sister Charlotte, with an arch laugh, 'I suspect Harry's in love again.'

'And if I were in love, Charlotte,' said I, somewhat nettled, and recollecting Glencoe's enthusiastic eulogy of the passion, 'if I were in love, is that a matter of *jest and laughter* ? Is the tenderest and most fervid

affection that can animate the human breast, to be made a matter of cold-hearted ridicule ?

My sister colored. 'Certainly not, brother !—nor did I mean to make it so, or to say any thing that should wound your feelings. Had I really suspected you had formed some genuine attachment, it would have been sacred in my eyes ; but—but,' said she, smiling, as if at some whimsical recollection, 'I thought that you—you might be indulging in another little freak of the imagination.'

'I'll wager any money,' cried my father, 'he has fallen in love again with some old lady at a window !'

'Oh no !' cried my dear sister Sophy, with the most gracious warmth ; 'she is young and beautiful.'

'From what I understand,' said Glencoe, rousing himself, she must be lovely in mind as in person.'

I found my friends were getting me into a fine scrape. I began to perspire at every pore, and felt my ears tingle.

'Well, but,' cried my father, 'who is she ?—what is she ? Let us hear something about her.'

This was no time to explain so delicate a matter. I caught up my hat, and vanished out of the house.

The moment I was in the open air, and alone, my heart upbraided me. Was this respectful treatment to my father—to *such* a father, too—who had always regarded me as the pride of his age—the staff of his hopes ? It is true, he was apt, sometimes, to laugh at my enthusiastic flights, and did not treat my philosophy with due respect ; but when had he ever thwarted a wish of my heart ? Was I then to act with reserve toward him, in a matter which might

affect the whole current of my future life? 'I have done wrong,' thought I; 'but it is not too late to remedy it. I will hasten back, and open my whole heart to my father!'

I returned accordingly, and was just on the point of entering the house, with my heart full of filial piety, and a contrite speech upon my lips, when I heard a burst of obstreperous laughter from my father, and a loud titter from my two elder sisters.

'A footstep!' shouted he, as soon as he could recover himself; 'in love with a footstep! Why, this beats the old lady at the window!' And then there was another appalling burst of laughter. Had it been a clap of thunder, it could hardly have astounded me more completely. Sophy, in the simplicity of her heart, had told all, and had set my father's risible propensities in full action.

Never was poor mortal so thoroughly crest-fallen as myself. The whole delusion wast at an end. I drew off silently from the house, shrinking smaller and smaller at every fresh peal of laughter; and wandering about until the family had retired, stole quietly to my bed. Scarce any sleep, however, visited my eyes that night! I lay overwhelmed with mortification, and meditating how I might meet the family in the morning. The idea of ridicule was always intolerable to me; but to endure it on a subject by which my feelings had been so much excited, seemed worse than death. I almost determined, at one time, to get up, saddle my horse, and ride off, I knew not whither.

At length, I came to a resolution. Before going down to breakfast, I sent for Sophy, and employed

her as ambassador to treat formally in the matter. I insisted that the subject should be buried in oblivion; otherwise, I would not show my face at table. It was readily agreed to; for not one of the family would have given me pain for the world. They faithfully kept their promise. Not a word was said of the matter; but there were wry faces, and suppressed titters, that went to my soul; and whenever my father looked me in the face, it was with such a tragi-comical leer—such an attempt to pull down a serious brow upon a whimsical mouth—that I had a thousand times rather he had laughed outright.

For a day or two after the mortifying occurrence I kept as much as possible out of the way of the family, and wandered about the fields and woods by myself. I was sadly out of tune: my feelings were all jarred and unstrung. The birds sang from every grove, but I took no pleasure in their melody; and the flowers of the field bloomed unheeded around me. To be crossed in love, is bad enough; but then one can fly to poetry for relief; and turn one's woes to account in soul-subduing stanzas. But to have one's whole passion, object and all, annihilated, dispelled, proved to be such stuff as dreams are made of—or, worse than all, to be turned into a proverb and a jest—what consolation is there in such a case?

I avoided the fatal brook where I had seen the footstep. My favorite resort was now the banks of the Hudson, where I sat upon the rocks, and mused upon the current that dimpled by, or the waves that laved the shore; or watched the bright mutations of the clouds, and the shifting lights and shadows of the distant mountain. By degrees, a returning

serenity stole over my feelings : and a sigh now and then, gentle and easy, and unattended by pain, showed that my heart was recovering its susceptibility.

As I was sitting in this musing mood, my eye became gradually fixed upon an object that was borne along by the tide. It proved to be a little pinnace, beautifully modelled, and gaily painted and decorated. It was an unusual sight in this neighborhood, which was rather lonely : indeed, it was rare to see any pleasure-barks in this part of the river. As it drew nearer, I perceived that there was no one on board ; it had apparently drifted from its anchorage. There was not a breath of air : the little bark came floating along on the 'glassy stream, wheeling about with the eddies. At length it ran aground, almost at the foot of the rock on which I was seated. I descended to the margin of the river, and drawing the bark to shore, admired its light and elegant proportions, and the taste with which it was fitted up. The benches were covered with cushions, and its long streamer was of silk. On one of the cushions lay a lady's glove, of delicate size and shape, with beautifully tapered fingers. I instantly seized it and thrust it in my bosom : it seemed a match for the fairy footstep that had so fascinated me.

In a moment, all the romance of my bosom was again in a glow. Here was one of the very incidents of fairy tale : a bark sent by some invisible power, some good genius, or benevolent fairy to waft me to some delectable adventure. I recollected something of an enchanted bark, drawn by white swans, that conveyed a knight down the current of the Rhine, *on some enterprise connected with love and beauty.*

The glove, too, showed that there was a lady fair concerned in the present adventure. It might be a gauntlet of defiance, to dare me to the enterprise.

In the spirit of romance, and the whim of the moment, I sprang on board, hoisted the light sail, and pushed from shore. As if breathed by some presiding power, a light breeze at that moment sprang up, swelled out the sail, and dallied with the silken streamer. For a time I glided along under steep umbrageous banks, or across deep sequestered bays; and then stood out over a wide expansion of the river, toward a high rocky promontory. It was a lovely evening: the sun was setting in a congregation of clouds that threw the whole heavens in a glow, and were reflected in the river. I delighted myself with all kinds of fantastic fancies, as to what enchanted island, or mystic bower, or necromantic palace I was to be conveyed by the fairy bark.

In the revel of my fancy, I had not noticed that the gorgeous congregation of clouds which had so much delighted me, was in fact a gathering thunder-gust. I perceived the truth too late. The clouds came hurrying on, darkening as they advanced. The whole face of nature was suddenly changed, and assumed that baleful and livid tint, predictive of a storm. I tried to gain the shore, but before I could reach it, a blast of wind struck the water and lashed it at once into foam. The next moment it overtook the boat. Alas! I was nothing of a sailor; and my protecting fairy forsook me in the moment of peril. I endeavored to lower the sail: but in so doing, I had to quit the helm; the bark was overturned in an instant, and I was thrown into the water. I en-

deavored to cling to the wreck, but missed my hold : being a poor swimmer, I soon found myself sinking, but grasped a light oar that was floating by me. It was not sufficient for my support : I again sank beneath the surface ; there was a rushing and bubbling sound in my ears, and all sense forsook me.

How long I remained insensible, I know not. I had a confused notion of being moved and tossed about, and of hearing strange beings and strange voices around me ; but all was like a hideous dream. When I at length recovered full consciousness and perception, I found myself in bed, in a spacious chamber, furnished with more taste than I had been accustomed to. The bright rays of a morning sun were intercepted by curtains of a delicate rose color, that gave a soft, voluptuous tinge to every object. Not far from my bed, on a classic tripod, was a basket, of beautiful exotic flowers, breathing the sweetest fragrance.

‘Where am I? How came I here?’

I tasked my mind to catch at some previous event, from which I might trace up the thread of existence to the present moment. By degrees I called to mind the fairy pinnace, my daring embarkation, my adventurous voyage, and my disastrous shipwreck. Beyond that, all was chaos. How came I here? What unknown region had I landed upon? The people that inhabited it must be gentle and amiable, and of elegant tastes, for they loved downy beds, fragrant flowers, and rose-colored curtains.

While I lay thus musing, the tones of a harp reached my ear. Presently they were accompanied

by a female voice. It came from the room below ; but in the profound stillness of my chamber, not a modulation was lost. My sisters were all considered good musicians, and sang very tolerably ; but I had never heard a voice like this. There was no attempt at difficult execution, or striking effect ; but there were exquisite inflexions, and tender turns, which art could not reach. Nothing but feeling and sentiment could produce them. It was soul breathed forth in sound. I was always alive to the influence of music : indeed, I was susceptible of voluptuous influences of every kind—sounds, colors, shapes, and fragrant odors. I was the very slave of sensation.

I lay mute and breathless, and drank in every note of this syren strain. It thrilled through my whole frame, and filled my soul with melody and love. I pictured to myself, with curious logic, the form of the unseen musician. Such melodious sounds and exquisite inflections could only be produced by organs of the most delicate flexibility. Such organs do not belong to coarse, vulgar forms ; they are the harmonious results of fair proportions, and admirable symmetry. A being so organized, must be lovely.

Again my busy imagination was at work. I called to mind the Arabian story of a prince, borne away during sleep by a good genius, to the distant abode of a princess, of ravishing beauty. I do not pretend to say that I believed in having experienced a similar transportation ; but it was my inveterate habit to cheat myself with fancies of the kind, and to give the tinge of illusion to surrounding realities.

The witching sound had ceased, but its vibrations still played round my heart, and filled it with a

tumult of soft emotions. At this moment a self-upbraiding pang shot through my bosom. 'Ah, recreant!' a voice seemed to exclaim, 'is this the stability of thine affections? What! hast thou so soon forgotten the nymph of the fountain? Has one song, idly piped in thine ear, been sufficient to charm away the cherished tenderness of a whole summer?'

The wise may smile—but I am in a confiding mood, and must confess my weakness. I felt a degree of compunction at this sudden infidelity, yet I could not resist the power of present fascination. My peace of mind was destroyed by conflicting claims. The nymph of the fountain came over my memory, with all the associations of fairy footsteps, shady groves, soft echoes, and wild streamlets; but this new passion was produced by a strain of soul-subduing melody, still lingering in my ear, aided by a downy bed, fragrant flowers, and rose-colored curtains. 'Unhappy youth!' sighed I to myself, 'distracted by such rival passions, and the empire of thy heart thus violently contested by the sound of a voice, and the print of a footstep!'

I HAD not remained long in this mood, when I heard the door of the room gently opened. I turned my head to see what inhabitant of this enchanted palace should appear; whether page in green, a hideous dwarf, or haggard fairy. It was my own man Scipio. He advanced with cautious step and was delighted, as he said, to find me so much myself again. My first questions were as to where I was, and how I came there? Scipio told me a long story of *his* having been fishing in a canoe, at the time of

my hair-brained cruise ; of his noticing the gathering squall, and my impending danger ; of his hastening to join me, but arriving just in time to snatch me from a watery grave ; of the great difficulty of restoring me to animation ; and of my being subsequently conveyed, in a state of insensibility, to this mansion.

‘But where am I?’ was the reiterated demand.

‘In the house of Mr. Somerville.’

‘Somerville—Somerville!’ I recollected to have heard that a gentleman of that name had recently taken up his residence at some distance from my father’s abode, on the opposite side of the Hudson. He was commonly known by the name of ‘French Somerville,’ from having passed part of his early life in France, and from his exhibiting traces of French taste in his mode of living, and the arrangements of his house. In fact, it was in his pleasure-boat, which had got adrift, that I had made my fanciful and disastrous cruise. All this was simple, straight-forward matter of fact, and threatened to demolish all the cob-web romance I had been spinning, when fortunately I again heard the tinkling of a harp. I raised myself in bed, and listened.

‘Scipio,’ said I, with some little hesitation, ‘I heard some one singing just now. Who was it?’

‘Oh, that was Miss Julia.’

‘Julia ! Julia ! Delightful ! what a name ! And, Scipio—is she—is she pretty ?’

Scipio grinned from ear to ear. ‘Except Miss Sophy, she was the most beautiful young lady he had ever seen.’

I should observe, that my sister Sophia was considered by all the servants a paragon of perfection.

Scipio now offered to remove the basket of flowers; he was afraid their odor might be too powerful; but Miss Julia had given them that morning to be placed in my room.

These flowers, then, had been gathered by the fairy fingers of my unseen beauty; that sweet breath which had filled my ear with melody, had passed over them. I made Scipio hand them to me, culled several of the most delicate, and laid them on my bosom.

Mr. Somerville paid me a visit not long afterward. He was an interesting study for me, for he was the father of my unseen beauty, and probably resembled her. I scanned him closely. He was a tall and elegant man, with an open, affable manner, and an erect and graceful carriage. His eyes were bluish-gray, and though not dark, yet at times were sparkling and expressive. His hair was dressed and powdered, and being lightly combed up from his forehead, added to the loftiness of his aspect. He was fluent in discourse, but his conversation had the quiet tone of polished society, without any of those bold flights of thought, and picturings of fancy, which I so much admired.

My imagination was a little puzzled, at first, to make out of this assemblage of personal and mental qualities, a picture that should harmonize with my previous idea of the fair unseen. By dint, however, of selecting what it liked, and rejecting what it did not like, and giving a touch here and a touch there, it soon furnished out a satisfactory portrait.

'Julia must be tall,' thought I, *'and of exquisite*

grace and dignity. She is not quite so courtly as her father, for she has been brought up in the retirement of the country. Neither is she of such vivacious deportment; for the tones of her voice are soft and plaintive, and she loves pathetic music. She is rather pensive—yet not too pensive; just what is called interesting. Her eyes are like her father's, except that they are of a purer blue, and more tender and languishing. She has light hair—not exactly flaxen, for I do not like flaxen hair, but between that and auburn. In a word, she is a tall, elegant, imposing, languishing, blue-eyed, romantic-looking beauty.' And having thus finished her picture, I felt ten times more in love with her than ever.

I FELT so much recovered, that I would at once have left my room, but Mr. Somerville objected to it. He had sent early word to my family of my safety; and my father arrived in the course of the morning. He was shocked at learning the risk I had run, but rejoiced to find me so much restored, and was warm in his thanks to Mr. Somerville for his kindness. The other only required, in return, that I might remain two or three days as his guest, to give time for my recovery, and for our forming a closer acquaintance; a request which my father readily granted. Scipio accordingly accompanied my father home, and returned with a supply of clothes, and with affectionate letters from my mother and sisters.

The next morning, aided by Scipio, I made my toilet with rather more care than usual, and descended the stairs, with some trepidation, eager to see the

original of the portrait which had been so completely pictured in my imagination.

On entering the parlor, I found it deserted. Like the rest of the house, it was furnished in a foreign style. The curtains were of French silk; there were Grecian couches, marble tables, pier-glasses, and chandeliers. What chiefly attracted my eye, were documents of female taste that I saw around me; a piano, with an ample stock of Italian music: a book of poetry lying on the sofa; a vase of fresh flowers on a table, and a port-folio open with a skilful and half-finished sketch of them. In the window was a Canary bird, in a gilt cage, and near by, the harp that had been in Julia's arms. Happy harp! But where was the being that reigned in this little empire of delicacies?—that breathed poetry and song, and dwelt among birds and flowers, and rose-colored curtains?

Suddenly I heard the hall door fly open, the quick pattering of light steps, a wild, capricious strain of music, and the shrill barking of a dog. A light frolic nymph of fifteen came tripping into the room, playing on a flageolet, with a little spaniel romping after her. Her gipsy hat had fallen back upon her shoulders; a profusion of glossy brown hair was blown in rich ringlets about her face, which beamed through them with the brightness of smiles and dimples.

At sight of me, she stopped short, in the most beautiful confusion, stammered out a word or two about looking for her father, glided out of the door, and I heard her bounding up the stair-case, like a frightened fawn, with the little dog barking after her.

When Miss Somerville returned to the parlor, she

was quite a different being. She entered, stealing along by her mother's side with noiseless step, and sweet timidity : her hair was prettily adjusted, and a soft blush mantled on her damask cheek. Mr. Somerville accompanied the ladies, and introduced me regularly to them. There were many kind inquiries, and much sympathy expressed on the subject of my nautical accident, and some remarks upon the wild scenery of the neighborhood, with which the ladies seemed perfectly acquainted.

'You must know,' said Mr. Somerville, 'that we are great navigators, and delight in exploring every nook and corner of the river. My daughter, too, is a great hunter of the picturesque, and transfers every rock and glen to her port-folio. By the way, my dear, show Mr. Mountjoy that pretty scene you have lately sketched.' Julia complied, blushing, and drew from her port-folio a colored sketch. I almost started at the sight. It was my favorite brook. A sudden thought darted across my mind. I glanced down my eye, and beheld the divinest little foot in the world. Oh, blissful conviction ! The struggle of my affections was at an end. The voice and the footstep were no longer at variance. Julia Somerville was the nymph of the fountain !

WHAT conversation passed during breakfast, I do not recollect, and hardly was conscious of at the time, for my thoughts were in complete confusion. I wished to gaze on Miss Somerville, but did not dare. Once, indeed, I ventured a glance. She was at that moment darting a similar one from under a covert of ringlets. Our eyes seemed shocked by the rencontre, and fell ;

hers through the natural modesty of her sex, mine through the bashfulness produced by the previous workings of my imagination. That glance, however, went like a sun-beam to my heart.

A convenient mirror favored my diffidence, and gave me the reflection of Miss Somerville's form. It is true it only presented the back of her head, but she had the merit of an ancient statue; contemplate her from any point of view, she was beautiful. And yet she was totally different from every thing I had before conceived of beauty. She was not the serene, meditative maid that I had pictured the nymph of the fountain; nor the tall, soft, languishing, blue-eyed, dignified being, that I had fancied the minstrel of the harp. There was nothing of dignity about her: she was girlish in her appearance, and scarcely of the middle size; but then there was the tenderness of budding youth; the sweetness of the half-blown rose, when not a tint or perfume has been withered or exhaled; there were smiles and dimples, and all the soft witcheries of ever-varying expression. I wondered that I could ever have admired any other style of beauty.

After breakfast, Mr. Somerville departed to attend to the concerns of his estate, and gave me in charge of the ladies. Mrs. Somerville also was called away by household cares, and I was left alone with Julia! Here then was the situation which of all others I had most coveted. I was in the presence of the lovely being that had so long been the desire of my heart. We were alone; propitious opportunity for a lover! Did I seize upon it? Did I break out in one of my

accustomed rhapsodies? No such thing! Never was more awkwardly embarrassed.

‘What can be the cause of this?’ thought I. ‘Surely, I cannot stand in awe of this young girl. I am of course her superior in intellect, and am never embarrassed in company with my tutor, notwithstanding all his wisdom.’

It was passing strange. I felt that if she were an old woman, I should be quite at my ease; if she were even an ugly woman, I should make out very well; it was her beauty that overpowered me. How little do lovely women know what awful beings they are, in the eyes of inexperienced youth! Young men brought up in the fashionable circles of our cities will smile at all this. Accustomed to mingle incessantly in female society, and to have the romance of the heart deadened by a thousand frivolous flirtations, women are nothing but women in their eyes; but to a susceptible youth like myself, brought up in the country, they are perfect divinities.

Miss Somerville was at first a little embarrassed herself; but, some how or other, women have a natural adroitness in recovering their self-possession; they are more alert in their minds, and graceful in their manners. Beside, I was but an ordinary personage in Miss Somerville’s eyes; she was not under the influence of such a singular course of imaginings as had surrounded her, in my eyes, with the illusions of romance. Perhaps, too, she saw the confusion in the opposite camp, and gained courage from the discovery. At any rate, she was the first to take the field.

Her conversation, however, was only on commonplace topics, and in an easy, well-bred style. I en-

deavored to respond in the same manner ; but I was strangely incompetent to the task. My ideas were frozen up ; even words seemed to fail me. I was excessively vexed at myself, for I wished to be uncommonly elegant. I tried two or three times to turn a pretty thought, or to utter a fine sentiment ; but it would come forth so trite, so forced, so mawkish, that I was ashamed of it. My very voice sounded discordantly, though I sought to modulate it into the softest tones. ‘The truth is,’ thought I to myself, ‘I cannot bring my mind down to the small-talk necessary for young girls ; it is too masculine and robust for the mincing measure of parlor gossip. I am a philosopher—and that accounts for it.’

The entrance of Mrs. Somerville at length gave me relief. I at once breathed freely, and felt a vast deal of confidence come over me. ‘This is strange,’ thought I, ‘that the appearance of another woman should revive my courage ; that I should be a better match for two women than one. However, since it is so, I will take advantage of the circumstance, and let this young lady see that I am not so great a simpleton as she probably thinks me.’

I accordingly took up the book of poetry which lay upon the sofa. It was Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. Nothing could have been more fortunate ; it afforded a fine scope for my favorite vein of grandiloquence. I went largely into a discussion of its merits, or rather an enthusiastic eulogy of them. My observations were addressed to Mrs. Somerville, for I found I could talk to her with more ease than to her daughter. She appeared perfectly alive to the beauties of the poet, *and disposed to meet me in the discussion ; but it*

was not my object to hear her talk ; it was to talk myself. I anticipated all she had to say, overpowered her with the copiousness of my ideas, and supported and illustrated them by long citations from the author.

While thus holding forth, I cast a side glance to see how Miss Somerville was affected. She had some embroidery stretched on a frame before her, but had paused in her labor, and was looking down as if lost in mute attention. I felt a glow of self-satisfaction, but I recollected, at the same time, with a kind of pique, the advantage she had enjoyed over me in our tête-à-tête. I determined to push my triumph, and accordingly kept on with redoubled ardor, until I had fairly exhausted my subject, or rather my thoughts.

I had scarce come to a full stop, when Miss Somerville raised her eyes from the work on which they had been fixed, and turning to her mother, observed : ' I have been considering, mamma, whether to work these flowers plain, or in colors.'

Had an ice-bolt been shot to my heart, it could not have chilled me more effectually. ' What a fool,' thought I, ' have I been making myself—squandering away fine thoughts, and fine language upon a light mind, and an ignorant ear ! This girl knows nothing of poetry. She has no soul, I fear, for its beauties. Can any one have real sensibility of heart, and not be alive to poetry ? However, she is young ; this part of her education has been neglected : there is time enough to remedy it. I will be her preceptor. I will kindle in her mind the sacred flame, and lead her through the fairy land of song. But after all, it

is rather unfortunate, that I should have fallen in love with a woman who knows nothing of poetry.'

I PASSED a day not altogether satisfactory. I was a little disappointed that Miss Somerville did not show more poetical feeling. 'I am afraid, after all,' said I to myself, 'she is light and girlish, and more fitted to pluck wild flowers, play on the flageolet, and romp with little dogs, than to converse with a man of my turn.'

I believe, however, to tell the truth, I was more out of humor with myself. I thought I had made the worst first appearance that ever hero made, either in novel or fairy tale. I was out of all patience, when I called to mind my awkward attempts at ease and elegance, in the tête-à-tête. And then my intolerable long lecture about poetry, to catch the applause of a heedless auditor! But there I was not to blame. I had certainly been eloquent: it was her fault that the eloquence was wasted. To meditate upon the embroidery of a flower, when I was ex-patiating on the beauties of Milton! She might at least have admired the poetry, if she did not relish the manner in which it was delivered; though that was not despicable, for I had recited passages in my best style, which my mother and sisters had always considered equal to a play. 'Oh, it is evident,' thought I, 'Miss Somerville has very little soul!'

Such were my fancies and cogitations, during the day, the greater part of which was spent in my chamber, for I was still languid. My evening was passed in the drawing-room, where I overlooked Miss *Somerville's* port-folio of sketches. They were exe-

cuted with great taste, and showed a nice observation of the peculiarities of nature. They were all her own, and free from those cunning tints and touches of the drawing-master, by which young ladies' drawings, like their heads, are dressed up for company. There was no garish and vulgar trick of colors, either; all was executed with singular truth and simplicity.

'And yet,' thought I, 'this little being, who has so pure an eye to take in, as in a limpid brook, all the graceful forms and magic tints of nature, has no soul for poetry!'

Mr. Somerville, toward the latter part of the evening, observing my eye to wander occasionally to the harp, interpreted and met my wishes with his accustomed civility.

'Julia, my dear,' said he, 'Mr. Mountjoy would like to hear a little music from your harp; let us hear, too, the sound of your voice.'

Julia immediately complied, without any of that hesitation and difficulty, by which young ladies are apt to make company pay dear for bad music. She sang a sprightly strain, in a brilliant style, that came trilling playfully over the ear; and the bright eye and dimpling smile showed that her little heart danced with the song. Her pet Canary bird, who hung close by, was wakened by the music, and burst forth into an emulating strain. Julia smiled with a pretty air of defiance, and played louder.

After some time, the music changed, and ran into a plaintive strain, in a minor key. Then it was, that all the former witchery of her voice came over me; then it was, that she seemed to sing from the

heart and to the heart. Her fingers moved about the chords as if they scarcely touched them. Her whole manner and appearance changed; her eyes beamed with the softest expression; her countenance, her frame, all seemed subdued into tenderness. She rose from the harp, leaving it still vibrating with sweet sounds, and moved toward her father, to bid him good night.

His eyes had been fixed on her intently, during her performance. As she came before him, he parted her shining ringlets with both his hands, and looked down with the fondness of a father on her innocent face. The music seemed still lingering in its lineaments, and the action of her father brought a moist gleam in her eye. He kissed her fair forehead, after the French mode of parental caressing: 'Good night, and God bless you,' said he, 'my good little girl!'

Julia tripped away, with a tear in her eye, a dimple in her cheek, and a light heart in her bosom. I thought it the prettiest picture of paternal and filial affection I had ever seen.

When I retired to bed, a new train of thoughts crowded into my brain. 'After all,' said I to myself, 'it is clear this girl has a soul, though she was not moved by my eloquence. She has all the outward signs and evidences of poetic feeling. She paints well, and has an eye for nature. She is a fine musician, and enters into the very soul of song. What a pity that she knows nothing of poetry! But we will see what is to be done. I am irretrievably in love with her: what then am I to do? Come down to the level of her mind, or endeavor to raise her to some *kind of intellectual equality with myself?* That is

the most generous course. She will look up to me as a benefactor. I shall become associated in her mind with the lofty thoughts and harmonious graces of poetry. She is apparently docile: beside the difference of our ages will give me an ascendancy over her. She cannot be above sixteen years of age, and I am full turned of twenty.' So, having built this most delectable of air-castles, I fell asleep.

THE next morning, I was quite a different being. I no longer felt fearful of stealing a glance at Julia; on the contrary, I contemplated her steadily, with the benignant eye of a benefactor. Shortly after breakfast, I found myself alone with her, as I had on the preceding morning; but I felt nothing of the awkwardness of our previous tête-à-tête. I was elevated by the consciousness of my intellectual superiority, and should almost have felt a sentiment of pity for the ignorance of the lovely little being, if I had not felt also the assurance that I should be able to dispel it. 'But it is time,' thought I, 'to open school.'

Julia was occupied in arranging some music on her piano. I looked over two or three songs; they were Moore's Irish melodies.

'These are pretty things,' said I, flirting the leaves over lightly, and giving a slight shrug, by way of qualifying the opinion.

'Oh I love them of all things!' said Julia, 'they're so touching!'

'Then you like them for the poetry,' said I, with an encouraging smile.

'Oh yes; she thought them charmingly written.'

Now was my time. 'Poetry,' said I, assuming a

didactic attitude and air, 'poetry is one of the most pleasing studies that can occupy a youthful mind. It renders us susceptible of the gentle impulses of humanity, and cherishes a delicate perception of all that is virtuous and elevated in morals, and graceful and beautiful in physics. It ——'

I was going on in a style that would have graced a professor of rhetoric, when I saw a light smile playing about Miss Somerville's mouth, and that she began to turn over the leaves of a music book. I recollected her inattention to my discourse of the preceding morning. 'There is no fixing her light mind,' thought I, 'by abstract theory; we will proceed practically.' As it happened, the identical volume of Milton's *Paradise Lost* was lying at hand.

'Let me recommend to you, my young friend,' said I, in one of those tones of persuasive admonition, which I had so often loved in Glencoe, 'let me recommend to you this admirable poem: you will find in it sources of intellectual enjoyment far superior to those songs which have delighted you.' Julia looked at the book, and then at me, with a whimsically dubious air. 'Milton's *Paradise Lost*?' said she; 'oh, I know the greater part of that by heart.'

I had not expected to find my pupil so far advanced; however, the *Paradise Lost* is a kind of school book, and its finest passages are given to young ladies as tasks.

'I find,' said I to myself, 'I must not treat her as so complete a novice; her inattention, yesterday, could not have proceeded from absolute ignorance, but merely from a want of poetic feeling. I'll try her *again*.'

I now determined to dazzle her with my own erudition, and launched into a harangue that would have done honor to an institute. Pope, Spenser, Chaucer, and the old dramatic writers, were all dipped into, with the excursive flight of a swallow. I did not confine myself to English poets, but gave a glance at the French and Italian schools: I passed over Ariosto in full wing, but paused on Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered. I dwelt on the character of Clorinda: 'There's a character,' said I, 'that you will find well worthy a woman's study. It shows to what exalted heights of heroism the sex can rise; how gloriously they may share even in the stern concerns of men.'

'For my part,' said Julia, gently taking advantage of a pause, 'for my part, I prefer the character of Sophronia.'

I was thunderstruck. She then had read Tasso! This girl that I had been treating as an ignoramus in poetry! She proceeded, with a slight glow of the cheek, summoned up perhaps by a casual glow of feeling:

'I do not admire those masculine heroines,' said she, 'who aim at the bold qualities of the opposite sex. Now Sophronia only exhibits the real qualities of a woman, wrought up to their highest excitement. She is modest, gentle, and retiring, as it becomes a woman to be; but she has all the strength of affection proper to a woman. She cannot fight for her people, as Clorinda does, but she can offer herself up, and die, to serve them. You may admire Clorinda, but you surely would be more apt to love Sophronia; at least,' added she, suddenly appearing to recollect.

herself, and blushing at having launched into such a discussion, 'at least, that is what papa observed, when we read the poem together.'

'Indeed,' said I, dryly, for I felt disconcerted and nettled at being unexpectedly lectured by my pupil; 'indeed, I do not exactly recollect the passage.'

'Oh,' said Julia, 'I can repeat it to you;' and she immediately gave it in Italian.

Heavens and earth!—here was a situation! I knew no more of Italian than I did of the language of Psalmanazar. What a dilemma for a would-be-wise man to be placed in! I saw Julia waited for my opinion.

'In fact,' said I, hesitating, 'I—I do not exactly understand Italian.'

'Oh,' said Julia, with the utmost naïveté, 'I have no doubt it is very beautiful in the translation.'

I was glad to break up school, and get back to my chamber, full of the mortification which a wise man in love experiences on finding his mistress wiser than himself. 'Translation! translation!' muttered I, to myself, as I jerked the door shut behind me: 'I am surprised my father has never had me instructed in the modern languages. They are all-important. What is the use of Latin and Greek? No one speaks them; but here, the moment I make my appearance in the world, a little girl slaps Italian in my face. However, thank Heaven, a language is easily learned. The moment I return home, I'll set about studying Italian; and to prevent future surprise, I will study Spanish and German at the same time; and if any young lady attempts to quote Italian upon me again, *I'll bury her under a heap of High Dutch poetry!*'

I FELT now like some mighty chieftain, who has carried the war into a weak country, with full confidence of success, and been repulsed and obliged to draw off his forces from before some inconsiderable fortress.

‘However,’ thought I, ‘I have as yet brought only my light artillery into action ; we shall see what is to be done with my heavy ordinance. Julia is evidently well versed in poetry ; but it is natural she should be so ; it is allied to painting and music, and is congenial to the light graces of the female character. We will try her on graver themes.’

I felt all my pride awakened ; it even for a time swelled higher than my love. I was determined completely to establish my mental superiority, and subdue the intellect of this little being : it would then be time to sway the sceptre of gentle empire, and win the affections of her heart.

Accordingly, at dinner I again took the field, *en potence*. I now addressed myself to Mr. Somerville, for I was about to enter upon topics in which a young girl like her could not be well versed. I led, or rather forced, the conversation into a vein of historical erudition, discussing several of the most prominent facts of ancient history, and accompanying them with sound, indisputable apothegms.

Mr. Somerville listened to me with the air of a man receiving information. I was encouraged, and went on gloriously from theme to theme of school declamation. I sat with Marius on the ruins of Carthage ; I defended the bridge with Horatius Coles ; thrust my hand into the flame with Martius Scævola, and plunged with Curtius into the yawning gulph ; I fought side by side with Leonidas, at the

straits of Thermopylæ ; and was going full drive into the battle of Plataæ, when my memory, which is the worst in the world, failed me, just as I wanted the name of the Lacedemonian commander.

‘ Julia, my dear,’ said Mr. Somerville, ‘ perhaps you may recollect the name of which Mr. Somerville is in quest ?’

Julia colored slightly : ‘ I believe,’ said she, in a low voice, ‘ I believe it was Pausanias.’

This unexpected sally, instead of reinforcing me, threw my whole scheme of battle into confusion, and the Athenians remained unmolested in the field.

I am half inclined, since, to think Mr. Somerville meant this as a sly hit at my school-boy pedantry ; but he was too well bred not to seek to relieve me from my mortification. ‘ Oh !’ said he, ‘ Julia is our family book of reference for names, dates and distances ; and has an excellent memory for history and geography.’

I now became desperate ; as a last resource, I turned to metaphysics. ‘ If she is a philosopher in petticoats,’ thought I, ‘ it is all over with me.’

Here, however, I had the field to myself. I gave chapter and verse of my tutor’s lectures, heightened by all his poetical illustrations : I even went farther than he had ever ventured, and plunged into such depths of metaphysics, that I was in danger of sticking in the mire at the bottom. Fortunately, I had auditors who apparently could not detect my flounderings. Neither Mr. Somerville nor his daughter offered the least interruption.

When the ladies had retired, Mr. Somerville sat *some time with me* ; and as I was no longer anxious *to astonish*, I permitted myself to listen, and found

that he was really agreeable. He was quite communicative, and from his conversation I was enabled to form a juster idea of his daughter's character, and the mode in which she had been brought up. Mr. Somerville had mingled much with the world, and with what is termed fashionable society. He had experienced its cold elegancies, and gay insincerities ; its dissipation of the spirits, and squanderings of the heart. Like many men of the world, though he had wandered too far from nature ever to return to it, yet he had the good taste and good feeling to look back fondly to its simple delights, and to determine that his child, if possible, should never leave them. He had superintended her education with scrupulous care, storing her mind with the graces of polite literature, and with such knowledge as would enable it to furnish its own amusement and occupation, and giving her all the accomplishments that sweeten and enliven the circle of domestic life. He had been particularly sedulous to exclude all fashionable affectations ; all false sentiment, false sensibility, and false romance. 'Whatever advantages she may possess,' said he, 'she is quite unconscious of them. She is a capricious little being, in every thing but her affections ; she is, however, free from art ; simple, ingenious, innocent, amiable, and, I thank God ! happy.'

Such was the eulogy of a fond father, delivered with a tenderness that touched me. I could not help making a casual inquiry, whether, among the graces of polite literature, he had included a slight tincture of metaphysics. He smiled, and told me he had not.

On the whole, when, as usual, that night, I summed up the day's observations on my pillow, I was not altogether dissatisfied. 'Miss Somerville,' said I,

'loves poetry, and I like her the better for it. She has the advantage of me in Italian: agreed; what is it to know a variety of languages, but merely to have a variety of sounds to express the same idea? Original thought is the ore of the mind; language is but the accidental stamp and coinage, by which it is put into circulation. If I can furnish an original idea, what care I how many languages she can translate it into? She may be able, also, to quote names, and dates, and latitudes, better than I; but that is a mere effort of the memory. I admit she is more accurate in history and geography than I; but then she knows nothing of metaphysics.'

I had now sufficiently recovered, to return home; yet I could not think of leaving Mr. Somerville's, without having a little farther conversation with him on the subject of his daughter's education.

'This Mr. Somerville,' thought I, 'is a very accomplished, elegant man; he has seen a good deal of the world, and, upon the whole, has profited by what he has seen. He is not without information, and, as far as he thinks, appears to think correctly; but after all, he is rather superficial, and does not think profoundly. He seems to take no delight in those metaphysical abstractions, that are the proper aliment of masculine minds. I called to mind various occasions on which I had indulged largely in metaphysical discussions, but could recollect no instance where I had been able to draw him out. He had listened, it is true, with attention, and smiled as if in acquiescence, but had always appeared to avoid reply. Beside, I had made several sad blunders in the glow of eloquent declamation; but he had never interrupted

me, to notice and correct them, as he would have done had he been versed in the theme.

'Now it is really a great pity,' resumed I, 'that he should have the entire management of Miss Somerville's education. What a vast advantage it would be, if she could be put for a little time under the superintendence of Glencoe. He would throw some deeper shades of thought into her mind, which at present is all sunshine; not but that Mr. Somerville has done very well, as far as he has gone; but then he has merely prepared the soil for the strong plants of useful knowledge. She is well versed in the leading facts of history, and the general course of belles lettres,' said I; 'a little more philosophy would do wonders.'

I accordingly took occasion to ask Mr. Somerville for a few moments' conversation in his study, the morning I was to depart. When we were alone, I opened the matter fully to him. I commenced with the warmest eulogium of Glencoe's powers of mind, and vast acquirements, and ascribed to him all my proficiency in the higher branches of knowledge. I begged, therefore, to recommend him as a friend calculated to direct the studies of Miss Somerville; to lead her mind, by degrees, to the contemplation of abstract principles, and to produce habits of philosophical analysis; 'which,' added I, gently smiling, 'are not often cultivated by young ladies.' I ventured to hint, in addition, that he would find Mr. Glencoe a most valuable and interesting acquaintance for himself; one who would stimulate and evolve the powers of his mind; and who might open to him tracts of inquiry and speculation, to which perhaps he had hitherto been a stranger.

Mr. Somerville listened with grave attention. When I had finished, he thanked me in the politest manner for the interest I took in the welfare of his daughter and himself. He observed that, as it regarded himself, he was afraid he was too old to benefit by the instruction of Mr. Glencoe, and that as to his daughter, he was afraid her mind was but little fitted for the study of metaphysics. 'I do not wish,' continued he, 'to strain her intellects with subjects they cannot grasp, but to make her familiarly acquainted with those that are within the limits of her capacity. I do not pretend to prescribe the boundaries of female genius, and am far from indulging the vulgar opinion, that women are unfitted by nature for the highest intellectual pursuits. I speak only with reference to my daughter's taste and talents. She will never make a learned woman; nor in truth do I desire it; for such is the jealousy of our sex, as to mental as well as physical ascendancy, that a learned woman is not always the happiest. I do not wish my daughter to excite envy, or to battle with the prejudices of the world; but to glide peaceably through life, on the good will and kind opinions of her friends. She has ample employment for her little head, in the course I have marked out for her; and is busy at present with some branches of natural history, calculated to awaken her perceptions to the beauties and wonders of nature, and to the inexhaustible volume of wisdom constantly spread open before her eyes. I consider that woman most likely to make an agreeable companion, who can draw topics of pleasing remark from every natural object; and most likely to be cheerful and contented, who is continually sensible of the order, the harmony, and

the invariable beneficence, that reign throughout the beautiful world we inhabit.'

'But,' added he, smiling, 'I am betraying myself into a lecture, instead of merely giving a reply to your kind offer. Permit me to take the liberty, in return, of inquiring a little about your own pursuits. You speak of having finished your education; but of course you have a line of private study and mental occupation marked out; for you must know the importance, both in point of interest and happiness, of keeping the mind employed. May I ask what system you observe in your intellectual exercises?'

'Oh, as to system,' I observed, 'I could never bring myself into any thing of the kind. I thought it best to let my genius take its own course, as it always acted the most vigorously when stimulated by inclination.'

Mr. Somerville shook his head. 'This same genius,' said he, 'is a wild quality, that runs away with our most promising young men. It has become so much the fashion, too, to give it the reins, that it is now thought an animal of too noble and generous a nature to be brought to the harness. But it is all a mistake. Nature never designed these high endowments to run riot through society, and throw the whole system into confusion. No, my dear Sir; genius, unless it acts upon system, is very apt to be a useless quality to society; sometimes an injurious, and certainly a very uncomfortable one, to its possessor. I have had many opportunities of seeing the progress through life of young men who were accounted geniuses, and have found it too often end in early exhaustion and bitter disappointment; *and have as often noticed that these effects might be*

traced to a total want of system. There were no habits of business, of steady purpose, and regular application, superinduced upon the mind: every thing was left to chance and impulse, and native luxuriance, and every thing of course ran to waste and wild entanglement. Excuse me, if I am tedious on this point, for I feel solicitous to impress it upon you, being an error extremely prevalent in our country, and one into which too many of our youth have fallen. I am happy, however, to observe the zeal which still appears to actuate you for the acquisition of knowledge, and augur every good from the elevated bent of your ambition. May I ask what has been your course of study for the last six months?

Never was question more unluckily timed. For the last six months I had been absolutely buried in novels and romances.

Mr. Somerville perceived that the question was embarrassing, and with his invariable good breeding, immediately resumed the conversation, without waiting for a reply. He took care, however, to turn it in such a way as to draw from me an account of the whole manner in which I had been educated, and the various currents of reading into which my mind had run. He then went on to discuss briefly, but impressively, the different branches of knowledge most important to a young man in my situation; and to my surprise I found him a complete master of those studies on which I had supposed him ignorant, and on which I had been descanting so confidently.

He complimented me, however, very graciously, upon the progress I had made, but advised me for the *present* to turn my attention to the physical rather *than the moral sciences*. 'These studies,' said he,

‘store a man’s mind with valuable facts, and at the same time repress self-confidence, by letting him know how boundless are the realms of knowledge, and how little we can possibly know. Whereas metaphysical studies, though of an ingenious order of intellectual employment, are apt to bewilder some minds with vague speculations. They never know how far they have advanced, or what may be the correctness of their favorite theory. They render many of our young men verbose and declamatory, and prone to mistake the aberrations of their fancy for the inspirations of divine philosophy.’

I could not but interrupt him, to assent to the truth of these remarks, and to say that it had been my lot, in the course of my limited experience, to encounter young men of the kind, who had overwhelmed me by their verbosity.

Mr. Somerville smiled. ‘I trust,’ said he, kindly, ‘that you will guard against these errors. Avoid the eagerness with which a young man is apt to hurry into conversation, and to utter the crude and ill-digested notions which he has picked up in his recent studies. Be assured that extensive and accurate knowledge is the slow acquisition of a studious life time; that a young man, however pregnant his wit, and prompt his talent, can have mastered but the rudiments of learning, and, in a manner, attained the implements of study. Whatever may have been your past assiduity, you must be sensible that as yet you have but reached the threshold of true knowledge; but at the same time, you have the advantage that you are still very young, and have ample time to learn.’

Here our conference ended. I walked out of the

study, a very different being from what I was on entering it. I had gone in with the air of a professor about to deliver a lecture ; I came out like a student, who had failed in his examination, and been degraded in his class.

‘Very young,’ and ‘on the threshold of knowledge!’ This was extremely flattering, to one who had considered himself an accomplished scholar, and profound philosopher !

‘It is singular,’ thought I ; ‘there seems to have been a spell upon my faculties, ever since I have been in this house. I certainly have not been able to do myself justice. Whenever I have undertaken to advise, I have had the tables turned upon me. It must be that I am strange and diffident among people I am not accustomed to. I wish they could hear me talk at home !’

‘After all,’ added I, on farther reflection, ‘after all, there is a great deal of force in what Mr. Somerville has said. Some how or other, these men of the world do now and then hit upon remarks that would do credit to a philosopher. Some of his general observations came so home, that I almost thought they were meant for myself. His advice about adopting a system of study, is very judicious. I will immediately put it in practice. My mind shall operate henceforward with the regularity of clock-work.

How far I succeeded in adopting this plan, how I fared in the farther pursuit of knowledge, and how I succeeded in my suit to Julia Somerville, may afford matter for a farther communication to the public, if this simple record of my early life is *fortunate enough* to excite any curiosity.

THE MARRIED MAN'S EYE.



THE MARRIED MAN'S EYE.

'There's daggers in men's eyes!'

'OPEN the window, Hetty,' said my uncle Andover, to the house-maid; 'let in a little fresh air, this fine morning.' Hetty threw up the sash quickly, and smash! went a pane of glass. The poor girl turned her frightened eye toward us, but my uncle went on talking as if he had not heard the noise.

'Sir, Mr. Andover, please to look,' said Hetty, 'I have broken a pane of glass, and Miss Andover will be so angry!'

'Angry?—for what? Here, take this money,' said he, 'and run off quickly for the glazier. I will pick up the pieces while you are gone. 'Angry,' indeed! Miss Andover does not get angry for such trifles; but be off before she comes home, if you are afraid.'

Dear uncle Andover!—he screened every body from harm. All Camperdown knew the value of his friendship. He was just turned of sixty, with a healthy, unbroken constitution, a fine flow of spirits,

and an even temper. He was benevolent and untiring in his disposition to do good; and as all the world knew this, he was not suffered to remain unoccupied a moment. All this, added to a large income, and a larger heart, made him one of the most popular men in Camperdown.

With all these qualifications, it was a wonder that he never married, for he was a very handsome man, even at this advanced age. But he was a bachelor from choice, I assure you; for many a lady, even now, would be glad to receive an offer from him. Strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless really true, my uncle was never in love—that is, violently in love, as I am at this moment—and therefore he never thought of marriage.

‘My dear uncle,’ said I, when the glazier had gone, ‘how has it happened that you never married? You have always been rich, and from what I can now see, you must have been very handsome.’ Here my uncle pulled up his collar, and settled his chin, casting his eye toward the glass.

‘Why, as to that, Leo, I believe I *was* tolerably well-looking in my youth, and I cannot but say I had many inducements to marry. My parents were very desirous that I should fall in love, and many a beauty was pointed out to me; but I suppose I had no turn for the tender passion. The fact is, Leo, I loved every woman so well, that I was afraid of hurting the feelings of the whole sex, if I gave one the preference. This was not, however, the only reason,’ said he, after a pause. ‘I had another and a stronger one. All my life I have been watching the behaviour of men to their wives, and I never met

with one man—no, not even your father, and he came of a gentle kind—who did not *scourge* his wife the very moment she was in his power. And, Leo, mark my words, you will do it too. It is human nature; it seems a thing not to be helped.'

'Scourge their wives! I scourge a woman!—such a lovely creature as Flora Webb!' thought I. 'But what do you mean by 'scourging'?'

'I mean what I say. Do you think there is only one kind of scourging? I certainly do not mean *beating*, though many a fellow, if he dared, would strike his wife, or slap her face, if she only acted a little perversely, just as he had acted, perhaps, only the moment before: but the scourging of which I speak, is with the *eye*; ay, you may stare, but it is the *Married Man's Eye*. Come, let us go to the village; I owe every body a visit, particularly Ormsby, who is just married to my little pet.' Every young woman, by the way was uncle Andover's pet. 'I cannot tell in which way *she* offends his married eye, but I will warrant that he has begun his scourging already. There is your aunt Phillida; she sees this matter as I do, and that has kept her from marrying. Before we settled in Camperdown, she had plenty of offers, for rich women are scarce. That old Mr. Root offered his hand to her full thirty years ago.'

'Look over the way, uncle: there stands that little red-haired Davison, the meanest looking man I ever saw. Is it true that he made an attempt to address my sister Fanny, while I was in Europe?'

'Yes, he made a desperate attempt, but he was repulsed with scorn. Do not speak of it before your

aunt, for it puts her in a passion. I only wish we could keep him from coming so often to Camperdown, for he is hateful to me, as well as to her; and Mrs. Campbell—that is, our Jenny Hart that *was*—has set her face against him, and that has decided his fate here.'

'What! is Mrs. Campbell, the Jenny Hart of the thread-and-needle store?—she whom all the young men used to gaze at so?—the one that every body was in love with?'

'Yes; and I will take you there to-morrow. She is on a visit to New-York to-day. Your aunt told her all about Davison; and so, as I said, having set her face against him, he will not find it very convenient to settle in our neighborhood. Let him remain at Starkford.'

'Why, uncle, I never knew you so bitter toward any one before. What has he done to merit all this?'

'Well, Leo, we talked of scourging; of married men scourging their wives with the eye; but this man, for one that calls himself a man, is more brutal than a savage. Just look at him; a little paltry fellow, not bigger than my thumb; with red hair, a freckled face, a nose that you can hardly see, deep-set little red eyes, an ear like a long oyster, and a neck like a crane. There he goes; and he has a laugh and a joke with every one he meets. There comes our good Mr. Foster, the engineer. Ah! Alfred Grey does not stop; he touches his hat, and walks on. It has cowed Davison for a second; but there comes Job Martin, the tax-gatherer; now Davison has said a good thing, and they are laughing at

it. There comes our good Mr. Parsells. See how Davison's hat goes off to him : *there was a bow for you !*

'Who is this Mr. Parsells, uncle ? I do not recollect ever hearing the name before.'

'He is a retired merchant, and has bought an estate at Wicklowe, in the next village. He is very rich, and little Davison fawns and cringes before him, like a spaniel. I see it all now ; there is an only daughter there, too. Miss Parsells is not what I call an ugly woman, but if it were not for her immense expectations, ugly as Davison is himself, he would look for more beauty. The fellow has been twice married. Yes, there he goes : he has left the others, and has walked off with good-natured Jemmy Parsells.'

'But supposing that Miss Parsells is ugly ? Surely this man can have no pretensions to her hand ; and he is upward of forty, by his looks.'

'There is nothing better nor worse to be said of him, than that he scourged his wife to death. He married an only child ; I speak of his first wife, for the second one, poor thing !—no, lucky creature !—died of a pleurisy, before he had time to commence operations. His first wife was a young lady of good birth, and, as was supposed at the time, of good fortune. She was an intimate school friend of your aunt Phillida, but their intercourse was interrupted after the marriage. Mr. Dell, the father of Christina, was reputed to be rich, and Davison so ingratiated himself with him, that, being a hypochondriac, and not a good business man, the fellow soon became his factotum. Every thing fell into his hands ; and the

short of it is, that he determined to have Mr. Dell's money, and his daughter in the bargain, since he could not get one without the other.

'Ah, uncle, I recollect now: did I not see a Mrs. Davison with Aunt Phillida, at the Springs, the summer before I went abroad?'

'Yes, about four years ago, just before she died; and it was there that I saw how the wretch treated her; and yet no one else perceived it but your aunt and myself. Very few look deeply into such matters. Christina was compelled into the marriage; but your aunt thinks that if all the property had been settled on her, Davison would have treated her differently. I doubt it.'

'It is scarcely possible to tell you in what his deviltries consisted; but they were of such a nature, that in ten years—it was a slow poison, that eye of his—he fairly worked this gentle creature out of existence. I only wish you dared ask your aunt all about it, for women understand this misery better than men; but it almost sets her raving. Our principal reason for quitting Starkford, was because he had bought an estate there. Before the wretch married poor Christina Dell, he was the most devoted, the most obsequious, the most tender of lovers. He had to work hard to get the innocent young creature, for her dislike to him at first amounted almost to aversion. He consulted her taste in every thing, and seemed to have no will but hers.

'Well, Leo, only look at this man one year after marriage, nay one month, for he began immediately. He could not bear to hear her laugh; he could not *bear to see her pleased with any one's conversation*;

he sneered at her whenever she opened her lips—unobserved, mind, by others. By his hard manner, he drove off all her early associates, those who loved her dearly and could have comforted her. His eye—that little red eye of his—was kept on her whenever she opened her lips to speak, or to give an opinion; and it had the power of a serpent over her. There is no thralldom, Leo, like the thralldom of a married man's eye. He expected impossibilities, almost, from her, for her constitution was very delicate, and when she did the utmost that her feeble strength allowed, he sneered at her. At table, he never helped her to any thing he thought she liked. She could not bear rare meat, neither could he; yet I am told that in his own house he would not allow the cook to send the meat up well done, lest his wife might perchance get a piece that she liked. He actually punished himself, that he might scourge his unoffending wife. If, in the most humble way, when she thought he was particularly good-humored, she asked him for a slice not *quite* so rare, he would say some brutal or unfeeling thing to her, for which the very negro in waiting would like to kick him. If he deigned to help her to another piece, it was cut from a burnt, hard part, equally unpalatable. She never ate a mouthful at that wretch's table, without insult or taunt.

'It was fortunate that this poor young creature had no children; for his nature was such that I verily believe he would have tormented them, for the pleasure of tormenting his wife. When she found that all happiness was denied her in this world, she turned her affections to another and a better. There she found peace and love—a love tender and enduring.

She fell sick, at length; and *then* you should have seen the hypocrite. Oh, how he would run for the leecher, and bleeder—for the doctor, and the clergyman! You would have thought him the most devoted and tender of husbands. Almost every one, save the servants and your aunt Phillida, were deceived. Even the doctor called him a pattern-husband.

‘How he must have shrunk from the touch of the good clergyman, on the day after the funeral! The reverend man dearly loved his pure and gentle wife; and it went hard with him to part with her; but with all the confidence she reposed in him, she never breathed a syllable of her husband’s undeviating, petty tyranny. ‘Rest, therefore, in peace, my son!’ said he, as he arose to leave the room, placing his hand on her cruel husband’s head, ‘as she for whom we mourn is now an angel in heaven. You tenderly loved her; you sustained her in sickness and sorrow, and you comforted her in the last trying moments. Your conscience must acquit you of the slightest intentional unkindness, for you were all that a tender, considerate husband should be. Grieve not, therefore, like one without hope; but let us imitate the purity and integrity of her life, so that in the end your spirit may again be united to hers.’

‘Would you believe it, Leo?—the hypocrite told all this to one of his friends! There he comes again. Only hear that laugh! Just so he roared, and ‘made fun,’ when he was breaking his wife’s heart at home. Jokes! No one could have a dinner or a supper party without him. He afterward married Lavinia Marks, on the strength of his goodness to his wife; and I have no doubt the same thing will operate on

the mind of Miss Parsells and her father. Poor Christina Dell! But she is far happier where she is now, than she could be, even if Davison was not a brute. But come, let us sally out; it is visiting time, and we owe a great many visits. So, here we are; this is Ormsby's house. Now, Leo, look out for the man's eye.'

The newly-married couple were sitting together very lovingly, and every thing around them was bride-like and comfortable. They jumped up quickly to welcome us, for my uncle, as I said, was a general favorite. He praised every thing over and over again: even the ugly clock on the mantel-piece had his kind notice.

'Yes, I knew you would like it,' said the lively little lady, 'but James does not think it suitable for this small room. It is rather large, to be sure; but then bronze is so much more fashionable than gold. I am sorry, now, since he dislikes it so much, that I did not take the gilt one; but, Mr. Andover, how could I tell, *then*, that he preferred the gilt one? *Then*, he thought as I thought, and as I uniformly preferred the bronze clock, why he was only too happy to approve—was not you, James?' I never heard, then, of his dislike to this poor clock; but a month after marriage makes a great difference, you know, Mr. Andover.'

While she was laughing out gaily, in the pride and joy of a young bride's heart, Ormsby was trying to catch her eye. I saw that her prattle disconcerted him, and he wanted to stop her; but she ran on, and my uncle listened with as much glee and innocence as herself. Ormsby walked across the room, so as to

get in front of her, under pretence of pushing the clock straight.

'I believe James is satisfied with all my purchases,' said she, 'but that foolish clock ; and if I could, I would change it, yet, for the gold one. Why, only a little before you came in ——'

Her husband caught her eye this time, and his look quelled her ; for her laugh and her joyousness were at an end. She was puzzled to know why her little nonsense was taken amiss now, when it was always so pleasantly listened to before her marriage. This was evidently the first stroke of the married man's eye. It embarrassed her ; she cast a timid glance at her husband, and was silent.

'Did you see the fellow's eye?' asked my uncle, when on our way to the next house. 'Now the poor child said nothing amiss ; she was only a little brish. Ormsby did not like the exposure. It showed he had struck the false colors of courtship, and had nailed up the red, stern flag to the mast-head. Men are all alike, Leo.'

Our next visit was to Mr. Emerson, the chemist. He lived in the greatest harmony with his wife ; they had been married seven years, and had several fine children. 'The very moment we entered the house, he cast a fierce look at his better half. 'My dear Jane,' said he, with a look and tone that badly accorded with the tender epithet, 'why do you shut out Mr. Anderson's dog?' Do open the door, and let him come in. Pray excuse her,' continued he, casting aside the married glance, and looking most kindly on us ; 'she has such an aversion to dogs, nay, such a foolish fear of them, that my poor Romeo

has but a sorry time of it, for when my back is turned, he is banished to the kitchen.'

'Then why,' said my uncle, mildly, 'why do you keep a dog, if Mrs. Emerson is afraid of them? I am very fond of cats, and I should have two or three Maltese and Angolas, if Phillida were not averse to it. She dislikes cats as much as your wife fears dogs, and in consequence, I have banished them. Leo, my son, step out and drive Brutus from the door; he is scratching at it, and Mrs. Emerson must not be kept uneasy.' Emerson here cast another look.

'What,' thought I, 'do all men change in this way after marriage?' My uncle, as if divining my thoughts nodded his head, but I shook mine. 'Never, Flora, shall this eye of mine look otherwise than tenderly on thee!'

'Did you see Emerson's eye?' said my uncle, when fairly on the pavement: 'and yet he is a pleasant fellow. How well he talks, and how kind and considerate he is to every body, poor and all. He is really a good man, and we could not get on well without him; and I have no doubt that he is, in the main, an indulgent husband. Now he might as well give up his fancy for dogs, seeing that his wife dislikes them. I cannot for my life conceive why he persists in it. Leo, it gives a woman a very bad opinion of our sex, when she finds how different a lover and a husband are. I remember the time when this very man, that lords it so with his eye, used to leave his dog at home when he went to Brighton to visit his sweet-heart. He was tender enough of her feelings, then. He gave up smoking, too, knowing that she disliked the smell of tobacco-smoke, yet the cigar is hardly ever

out of his mouth now. Did you see what a sarcastic look she put on, when I said that I gave up cats to please your aunt? The expression amounted to this: 'Yes, bachelor Andover, but there is all the difference in the world between giving up your whims to please your sister and renouncing them to please your wife. If Phillida had been your wife, instead of your sister, the cats would have been paramount.' And indeed, my dear nephew, I am afraid this would be the case. It is this fear which has kept me an old bachelor.'

Our next visit was to Mr. Renshaw, a retired merchant. He had an excellent wife, and lovely children, all of whom were in good health, and well managed. He was so cheerful and she seemed so much at her ease, that I cast my eye toward my uncle; but he shook his head. 'Wait awhile!' said he, in an under tone.

'How finely the children grow!' said he to Mr. Renshaw. 'Let me see; your eldest must be twelve years old, now?'

'I really do not know,' was the answer. 'My dear, how old did you say Augustus was? You told me, this morning, but I really have forgotten already.'

'But if it had been an animal,' said his wife, laughingly, 'you would not have forgotten. You always remember the age of your horse and your ——' Her husband gave her a look.

We saw several glances of the married man's eye, for the first did not seem to quell her sufficiently; yet she said nothing to deserve them. 'A woman,' said my uncle, as we passed on to the next house,

'never knows when she may banter or trifle. Sometimes her husband is in an easy mood, and then he will fall into the nonsense of the conversation; for, after all, it is nothing but nonsense that one talks in these morning visits. Here lives our good Dr. Fielding: let us stop here.'

'Doctor,' said Mrs. Fielding, after we had chatted a little while, 'show Mr. Andover little Mat's head, and see whether *he* pronounces the lump a wen or a bruise.' Ah, such a look as she got! It stopped her short at once. The doctor had no desire that his old friend should suppose him so ignorant in so simple a matter as wen or no wen.

'I have no doubt,' said uncle Andover, when we left the house, 'that the doctor was wondering and wondering about this wen, just for talk's sake, before we went in; and so his wife, feeling anxious, and for the want of something better to say, blundered on the wen. Are you satisfied now, Leo?' asked the good old bachelor.

Every thing that wealth and taste could combine was centred in and around the house of Mr. Frazer, a manufacturer in large business, and of great popularity. He was still in the prime of life, although he had a daughter married, whose first baby was now on its first visit to his house. Nothing, of course, was too good for the child and its mother, and Mr. Renshaw revelled in unalloyed happiness. We admired and wondered at the child's precocity and beauty, till even the mother was satisfied, and we were wondering what we should say next, when Mr. Frazer came in from his office.

After hearing all our praises over again, and getting

our opinion of his daughter's looks, he cast a cross glance at his wife, and said, 'My dear, I came near breaking my neck over the child's wagon in the entry; how could you let it stand there?' 'Oh, father,' said the daughter, 'it was my fault; it was I that left it there.' His face cleared up in an instant; for, as my uncle afterward observed, it makes a vast difference whether the injury, or opposition, or vexation, comes from a wife or a daughter. But with this branch of the question I have nothing to do at present. I am now only to speak of the married man's eye.

The next visit was to Mr. Graylove, the clergyman. I thought *his* wife could not be afraid of dogs, for there were no less than four lying about. Over one of them my uncle stumbled, as he entered the parlor; but instead of apologizing to him, Mr. Graylove cast a reproachful look at his poor wife.

'I told Mrs. Graylove,' said he, with another glance, 'that if she persisted in driving old Carlo from the hearth-rug, he would take to the door-rug; and now she sees I was right.'

'Oh, never mind,' said my uncle, mildly; 'no harm is done; only that Carlo has chosen a very inconvenient place of rest; for he must be continually disturbed by the opening and shutting of the door.'

'Yes, but the door opens outward, as you see,' said Mrs. Graylove; 'and people generally see him, and so step over him, if he is too lazy to get up, as he was to-day. If I had my way, dogs should never come in the parlor: they are a perfect nuisance, and I tell Mr. Graylove ——'

The eye quelled her. 'What!' said I, 'is it always *thus*? Is the married eye *always* ready to reproach?'

Our last visit was to a very aged couple, Timothy Winter, and his wife. He was an old country gentleman, of eighty-six, affluent and respectable. On this day, there were thirty-six children, grand-children, great grand-children, and two little twin boys, his great-great-great grand-children. It was their aged relative's birth-day.' 'Surely,' thought I, 'this man has scourged his eye out by this time.' 'Look out for his eye!' said uncle Andover.

All seemed to hover about the old man, and I kept wondering why the same fuss was not kept up with the old lady, too. Very little notice was taken of her. There she sat in a corner by herself, smiling and nodding, and looking so happy—poor old thing!—but to my eyes, she did not seem to belong to the people around her. She was a delicate, lady-like looking woman, with a mild expression, and of quiet manners; while the whole brood were needy, care-worn, sinister-looking people; rough and uneducated. Even the father, although of coarse exterior, had a cast of superiority. We often see this in families, and there is no accounting for it.

The only one that at all resembled the old lady, was the mother of the little twin boys, who died of a broken heart, from ill usage. Her husband was a brute, and broke his neck in a horse-race, just one month after his wife's death. The children were taken home to their paternal grandmother, and this, as I have said, was their first visit. With that placid smile on her face old Mrs. Winter was the only one in the group who felt a pang at the loss of the children's mother; and yet, living at a great dis-

tance from her, she had never been seen by the aged people.

No one, as I observed, paid much attention to old Mrs. Winter ; yet what had she not endured for them all ! In some shape or other, her assistance, her feelings, were in constant requisition. To every one of the rough, ungainly-looking people, she had more than acted a mother's part ; and yet they showed more respect to old Timothy, who had never voluntarily, my uncle said, done them one kind act. Young as I was, I had seen this before, in several families. The descendants make a greater ado with the old grandfather.

'Stand aside, Sally dear,' said the aged woman, and let me have another look at the dear little boys. Alas for their poor dear mother ! What are their names, did you say ? Henry and George ? Well, they are very pretty names, but I wonder that one of them was not called Timothy.'

Old Timothy had some such feeling in his own mind, for most old people have this passion of wishing their name to descend to their grand-children, let the name be ever so ugly. But if it was a mark of respect to give the child a name, so it was a mark of disrespect, or indifference, to neglect doing it. To make this neglect apparent to others, was offensive to old Timothy ; so he cast his eye wrathfully toward his wife : 'Nonsense !' said this old man of eighty-six. He meant that this look from his eye should have reached her, but it failed, for it fell on my uncle. Timothy was almost blind, yet he did his best.

'And yet,' said uncle Andover, after we left the

house, 'the old man was always thought to be a kind husband.'

'But why,' said I, sorely puzzled, 'why is it that all hover around the old man? I have observed it to be the case every where.'

'Why?' said he: 'why because men, to the last, hold the purse-strings, my son; and because all their children, grand, great-grand, and great-great-grand children, down to such little ones as the twins we have just left, have seen the man's eye quell their mother—the mother of all; she that suffered for them, that nursed them through many a desperate illness; she that has toiled for them down to her eightieth year, and has forever interceded for them, when the old man was churlish. The workings of that old man's eye—of every man's eye—has made her and all old women what they generally are, poor despised creatures; so that to be called 'an old woman,' is the most degrading epithet that can be applied. But their time is coming; their day is opening, Leo; and those little twin brothers will not say 'Nonsense!' and cast a fierce glance at their wives, when they, tender-hearted to the last, are anxious that their husband's name should be kept green and fresh in the minds of their descendants. Yes, my son, the moment a man marries, his eye begins to scourge his wife; but woman is now beginning to ask why this must be.'

'To be sure, my dear uncle,' said I, 'a man must often say and do foolish things, and often act contrary to his wife's judgment. He must, therefore, be as liable to the fierce glance of the eye, as she is. The only wonderful thing about it is, that any man

who tenderly loves his wife, can let his eye fall on her as if she were his enemy.' 'No, Flora,' said I, 'never shall this eye reprove thine!' Uncle Andover looked up and smiled.

At the head of the broad street, we stopped to buy an orange of old Mrs. Tray. She was waiting for us, and keeping herself in sight, that she might say a few words to good bachelor Andover, a name by which he always went, and to which he always answered as readily and as innocently as when he was called Leonardus, which was his name. Mrs. Tray was not so anxious that we should buy her fruit, as to hear my uncle say a few pleasant words to her, and to chat over the news of the day. Her husband sat on the steps, smoking his pipe. He was a poor, sorry, do-little fellow, blind of one eye, and did scarcely any thing toward supporting the household.

'Good morning, Mrs. Tray!' How are you, and how do you like the rail-road? They paid you well for cutting through your garden, didn't they?

'Why yes, thanks to you, bachelor Andover. I remember that, full forty years ago, you told me, then a young girl, and you but a few years older, that —— But may be you are one of those who do not like to speak of their age; not that you are so very old, bachelor Andover.'

'I am turned of sixty, Mrs. Tray; so do not fear that you will hurt my feelings, by classing me among the old. How curious it is, Leo, that people have an aversion to be thought old, as if age were disgraceful. Your good husband is looking very well, too, Mrs. Tray. He smokes still, I see.'

'Yes, Peter is quite well, at present; but I was

telling him as you came along this way, that he had better come in doors and smoke, as sitting in the sun, with his head leaning against the cold brick wall, would bring on his old head-ache.'

A fierce look from the old brute stopped her at once. He scoured her with the only eye he had.

We both laughed heartily, when out of hearing. 'You see,' said my uncle, 'that it runs through all ranks and degrees; and if every one would keep a look-out, as you and I have done to-day, the married man's eye would be seen in every house. It is so common a thing, that it is never noticed. It is looked upon as part of the marriage ceremony, or rather as having been engrafted upon a man, in consequence of the ceremony.'

'Yes, I shall now be for ever watching the married man's eye; but just for fun's sake, if you are not too tired, let us go down into this oyster-cellar, and see what kind of eye old Cato has. I hear the pan going; his wife is frying oysters.'

'His eye will work, too, depend upon it!' said my uncle, with a smile: 'he will quell her—he will quell her!'

But no such thing. To our amazement, his eye never shot an angry glance at the poor, heated, tired woman, doing her best, as nine wives out of ten always do. My dear uncle was quite 'put out' about it, for he was loth to admit that the rule did not hold good with all men. We staid full half an hour, seated on a clean bench, near the door-way, chatting with the old man and woman, who, in the time, dispensed two pan's full of oysters, nicely fried, to their customers.

My uncle, as I thought, made several efforts to provoke a shot from the eye of old Cato ; but it made no impression. I told him that I suspected he was playing false ; but he denied it, though he said if the glance could be obtained, it would not signify whether it was provoked, or whether it came naturally. It was the *proneness* to make use of the eye—the *authority* of the married man's eye—that he rebelled against.

But no unlucky word or deed from old Dinah had any effect upon her husband's dim, bleared eyes. My uncle now 'set in to talk,' first to Cato and then to Dinah, who was now preparing a third pan of oysters. 'I will show you Cato's eye yet !' said my uncle. 'I doubt it,' I replied.

'How many children have you, Cato ? I used to see four or five playing about you, a year or two ago, and now I only see the little girl who carried out the oysters.

'We have nine, massa Andover, and all doing pretty well,' ceptin' Clarissy, who lost her good husband, poor ting ! So I told my Dinah to let her and de tree children come home. Dat little girl is her oldest child.'

'This comes very hard upon *you*, Cato. I must tell my sister to look into it.'

'Tanky, massa, tanky ; but it is not for *me* to complain : only Dinah, my poor woman, I tell her she will fry her eyes out. I have nothin' to do but to sit still half de time and open oysters ; but tank God we have a great run, massa ; and Dinah, nobody can please de customers so well as she, massa. Den, when I have taken out de shells, I does nothin' but

go about and 'muse myself in de garden, or lean over de wagons, and get tings cheap. But it comes very hard upon my poor woman dere : ' and Cato cast a tender, humane glance at his wife, who having just finished her oysters, was turning them in a plate.

My uncle looked at me from the corner of his eye, to see if I had observed the old man's. ' I saw it,' said I ; ' it was a glance worth a guinea.'

In a moment Dinah stood before us, with a tray, on which were two plates, each containing six of the largest and finest oysters I ever saw. A little table was placed between us, on which was a snow-white cloth, bread, pickles, mustard, pepper and salt.

She turned aside to look at Cato ; and oh, what a delighted eye the affectionate husband cast on her ! He fairly rubbed his hands with joy, at this mark of attention to us.

' Dat 's it, Dinah, dat 's it ; now why didn't *I* tink of dis, too ? But she is always beforehand ' wid me, massa bachelor Andover. I tink women are always 'cuter dan men in such tings ; but when it comes to open oysters, den we beat 'em ! Yah ! yah !'

' Oh never mind it, Dinah, woman,' said he, when the poor soul, in her haste to hand my uncle a glass of water, knocked over the mustard-cup, the contents of which ran on his boots ; ' never mind it, old woman ; massa don't care, for I can soon polish him up again, and I'll buy you another mustard-cup.'

' Here is a dollar toward it,' said my uncle ; ' and here are two,' said I, ' for not casting an angry look at your wife, when she knocked the cup over.'

' *He* look mad at me !' said honest Dinah ; Lucky !

—why, young massa, Cato never looked mad at me once in his life, as I can remember.'

'Well, who would have thought it?' said my crest-fallen uncle, as we left the cellar. 'I must own that I tried hard, at the first going off, to provoke his eye to do its accustomed duty. But look—look there!'

Little Davison came smirking along, with Miss Parsells hanging on his arm; when just as he approached us, her bonnet caught in the straggling branch of a wild plum-tree, which stood in a little group of trees near the edge of the commons. The ribband gave way, and the bonnet was jerked from her head. Oh, how assiduous the fellow was, in extricating it from the branch! How devotedly he pinned the ribband fast, and how tenderly he tied the bonnet on again! Then he laughed so good humoredly at the joke, and at her embarrassment, and he drew her arm in his so gently as they moved away!

'He is engaged to her—he has her!' said my uncle; 'but remember this scene, Leo, and mark his behaviour a twelvemonth hence. Here comes our little beauty.'

It was indeed my dear Flora, blooming with goodness, health, and loveliness. I forgot little Davison—I forgot the whole world—as I sprang to her side.

'She is beautiful and happy,' said uncle Andover, as I told him of my engagement, which I did as soon as we left the dear girl at Oak Valley; 'but put off your marriage as long as you can. Ah! if you had told me of your love for her, I should have tried to persuade you to let her alone. She is too good, too innocent for the married eye.'

'What! do you think that my eye will ever try to quell that bright, beaming glance of hers?'

‘Yes, Leo, that it will. Old Cato has the only eye that does not carry a savage authority in it.’

Well, the short of the story is, that after a little coaxing, my dear aunt and uncle consented to our marriage; and it so happened that a few months after, as I was walking one fine afternoon with my lovely companion on my arm, and my uncle at her side—for he became very fond of her—we saw Davison and his wife, late Miss Parcells, in the very walk where we had encountered him before. Instead of *her* bonnet it was *his* hat that was knocked off by the branch, I dare say the same branch, of the wild plum. But the tone was altered now. ‘You would come this way!’ said he, looking fiercely at his wife, as he replaced his hat on his head: ‘you are always doing something or other to make me look ridiculous. Your own foolish hat was dragged from your own foolish head in this very spot.’

‘Do you hear?’ said my uncle. ‘I do,’ said I. ‘Did you see the look he gave her?’ ‘To be sure I did, and how meekly she bore it.’

‘Flora, my love, how you swing about!’ said I, not thinking that it was my attention to Davison’s manœuvres that prevented her from keeping the path. ‘Don’t gaze on those people so,’ said I, casting the married eye on poor Flora, who was only following my example. My uncle was a little in advance of us, and turned his head in time to catch the look.

‘Leo, write this all down,’ said bachelor Andover, ‘for the good of the female sex.’

‘I will,’ said I, looking abashed. ‘Flora, dearest, forgive me!’

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